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from nature by Rodez

Clarisse Enjalran Manson

Clad by T. Garner

CLARISSE ENJALRAN MANSON

Pub^d By J. Bumpus. 6 Holborn Bars Feb^y 6. 1818.

Manson, Marie Françoise Cloris
(Enjalran)

MEMOIRS
OF
MADAME MANSION,

EXPLANATORY OF HER CONDUCT,

ON

The Trial

FOR

THE ASSASSINATION

OF

M. FUALDES.

WRITTEN BY HERSELF,

AND

ADDRESSED TO MADAME ENJALRAN, HER MOTHER.

WITH A PORTRAIT AND FAC-SIMILE.

TRANSLATED FROM THE ORIGINAL.

LONDON:

PUBLISHED BY J. BUMPUS, 6, LOWER HOLBORN.

SOLD BY

SHERWOOD, NEELY, AND JONES, PATERNOSTER-ROW; BLACKLOCK,
ROYAL EXCHANGE; C. CHAPPELL, PALL-MALL; W. SHARPE,
KING-STREET; AND ALL OTHER BOOKSELLERS.

1818.

THE MOUNTAIN

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P R E F A C E.

IN the following attempt to convey to the British public, a work which has excited such unusual interest in France, as to pass through three editions, in almost the same number of days, the aim of the translator has been to make as *close* a translation as possible of the original. If his design has been successful, the reader will peruse the *extraordinary* memoir of a very *extraordinary* woman, though not in her own words, yet as nearly as it could be rendered in her own turn of thought. He has no where presumed, for the sake of aiming at *elegance*, to sacrifice *faithfulness*; judging that it would be more acceptable to those who may honour this work with a perusal, to be presented with those reasons which the writer has herself thought proper to assign, for her unparalleled conduct, in a nearly *literal* version of her own pamphlet. Whoever may open this little work with any view beyond that of hearing Madame

Manson plead her own cause, will be disappointed. Those, however, who take the trouble to read it through, will, the translator flatters himself, have her own, and *nothing but her own*, statement of facts; and to the judgment of the reader, he leaves it to pronounce sentence on that which is, to him, inexplicable. Should any errors have unavoidably escaped the notice of the translator, he must claim indulgence, on account of the haste which he has been obliged to use in bringing it out; under the additional disadvantage of struggling with the languor attendant on ill health.

London,
February 5th, 1818.

TO THE EDITOR.

SIR,

YOU are going to publish the Memoirs which Madame Manson, with the express intention of promulgating them, confided to me at Rodez; you have deemed it proper to remark, that, originally indited as a simple letter, and with the sole object of family confidence, these Memoirs would be deficient in some essential details. You decide that, in order to satisfy the expectations and the pressing curiosity of our readers, it will be expedient to annex to them notes explanatory of some passages, and observations less requisite to throw light on the text, than to convey an idea of the singular character of the author. In fine, you desire a hasty sketch of the earlier years of her youth.

I acknowledge the justice of these views; I will also grant that the advantage of being enabled, on the very spot which was the scene of these events, to gather from Madame Manson herself, and from the persons who had the best knowledge of them, the precise facts, and the clearest opinions, may inspire some confidence in the recital which I can transmit

to you; and yet I find myself under some perplexity in satisfying you; not that the conduct of this celebrated witness does not appear to myself distinctly unveiled; not that her avowals leave either doubt or uncertainty in my own mind; but I am sensible of the difficulty of conveying to the dispassionate reader, or to the prejudiced reviewer, a clear comprehension of the entire case. In her ingenuous statement, which is in other respects so remarkable for the grace and facility of a style which has allowed of no corrections, Madame Manson has by no means that method of narrating, that developement of facts, that light thrown so powerfully on circumstances, which we find in the simplest brief of a pleader. Who would dare flatter himself with supplying it, when she is still in that perilous situation in which the least word may do an ill office, to her meaning? So much of the marvellous has been sought for in this affair, that the best informed shrink back from the simple explanation which they could give, according to the idea which they have matured. I lack confidence to produce a natural hypothesis, where all France has supposed so many artifices, united interests, and profound combinations. Not doubtless, because there is nothing of the marvellous at the bottom of this history; otherwise Madame Manson could not escape the accusation of inconsiderateness and frivolity; but this marvellous does not hide itself in the facts; it reposes in the human heart; it is in the contradictory emotions of a woman dismayed, *influenced*, and menaced.

To explain the conduct of this female on the trial

for the assassination of M. Fualdes, let us attempt to analyze the resolutions which she has been seen to adopt in the course of events anterior to this memorable period, and let us throw a *coup-d'œil* on her education, character, and life. She would not implicate any one but herself in the reproach incurred by the errors which she has committed, and the misfortunes which she has undergone; I will force myself to imitate her submissive reserve. The cause of this silence may be generous: and if such is the case, where is the man who would not admire it, though even from that circumstance her justification should appear less complete and less signal?

Clarissa Enjalran was born at Rodez in 1785. She was almost entirely brought up in the country, in an ancient château named *le Perrie*, which her father purchased of M. de Bonald, at the commencement of the revolution. Her childhood was little indebted to education, and passed away in the midst of our political storms. A retreat, where her unfettered inclinations unfolded themselves, is sufficiently favourable to ideas of exaltation; and I have elsewhere observed how much this imposing solitude may have served to the developement of a romantic heart. Clarissa was from her birth endued with a very superior mind, great delicacy of wit, and exquisite sensibility; she early imbibed affections which might minister to the activity of her soul. She loved her parents, and particularly her mother, with a sort of passion. In the dangers which her father ran during the troubles of our anarchy, she, by the side of this courageous mother, displayed an heroic resignation.

Report has spoken of an attachment that would have ensnared her young heart, and the object of which was beneath the rank of her family and her expectations: we shall not weary ourselves with these floating rumours, which are, to say the least, uncertain. She espoused M. Manson, in compliance with her father's desire; and this union was not happy. At the expiration of three months the new married couple were separated. The officer, who had given her his hand, departed for Spain, and left her in the enjoyment of a liberty, which he had not till then permitted her, to resign herself into the hands of her mother. She found herself exposed to the dangers of the world, and its remarks; you know the air of our provinces; it seems that in the circles of a little town, one disdains to suppose the rigid observation of propriety, in order with a malicious complaisance to seek to envenom the most indifferent actions. Madame Manson, it must be allowed, lent more colour than any person, to scandalous interpretations: she was singular, for she was superior; and her independent character sowed enemies at her feet. On the return of the expedition from Spain, her husband came back to share his fire-side: they soon separated anew. M. Manson caused a legal order to be signified to his consort to come and dwell with him: but the young woman was near her indulgent consoler; she refused to obey him, and subscribed her refusal, indignant that he should cause a bailiff to interpose in their conjugal dissensions.

She received new and more tender entreaties, and some time after, the husband whom she had refused

to accompany, was in the château, under a disguise, concealed and privately nourished by the cares of his wife, who appeared to derive more animating attractions from a connexion thus disguised. The wedded lover was discovered; one would have believed the reunion easy! but Madame Enjalran could only use the remonstrances made by tenderness, to compel her daughter to separate herself from her; the husband was again sacrificed. Madame Manson knew how to shift him off; but, under the pretext of going sometimes to the village, to accomplish a pious duty, she gave him an interview in the woods. What shall explain the caprices of a heart so hard to be understood, as to demand, in the charm of duty, the pensive illusions of love? The character of Madame Manson alone: in studying it well, one perceives that what exalted imaginations represent to themselves as chimerical, is naturally found in her, in such manner, that it is impossible, whoever sketches an historic portrait of her, should not appear to have traced from fancy that of a heroine of romance. Madame de Stael would say of this lady, that she had not *prosaic* genius. Does it not appear as if this passage of Corinna was appropriate to her? “*The vulgar take for folly the uneasy workings of a soul which in this nether world does not respire sufficient air, sufficient enthusiasm, sufficient hope.*”*

However, it came to pass, the young wife became

* The Duchess of Longueville, so well known by the originality of her genius, and her connexions with the first men of the enlightened age, wrote one day, after having drank with delight a glass of water, “*What a pity it is that it is not a sin!*”

a mother; and from this event in her life, that life underwent an entire change. It was not the same with her destiny; her husband obtained a place many leagues from Rodez: the unfortunate woman remained solitary, reduced to an insufficient pension, and if one can believe the proceedings of the suit which has just been annulled, very irregularly paid. I shall be asked, perhaps, how I became instructed in the greatest part of these details; how, arrived at Rodez, to attend the new deliberations on the trial respecting Fualdes, I find myself entrusted with the confessions of an important witness; I will eagerly reply to them: I hold the original documents from the most unexceptionable source:* if I have inspired the mysterious captive with any confidence, I doubtless solely owe it to the advantage of having been introduced to her by an ecclesiastic, the friend of her family. Our unusual visits consoled her: far from approaching her with the prejudices with which

* If one had seen Madame Enjalran for a few instants, one would cease to be astonished that she was the object of unanimous applause. We find in a *Memoir*, printed at Montpellier in 1810, respecting a suit instituted by M. de Planard, the brother of this lady, against her husband, eulogiums which do honour to the brother and to the sister. M. de Planard claims from M. Enjalran property, fallen without doubt into the conjugal community, and yet he pleases himself in the midst of his reclamations with rendering homage to the disinterested character and to all the virtues of Madame Enjalran.

Since we have here cited M. Planard, whose name associates itself with the recollection of more than one literary triumph, we cannot refuse ourselves the pleasure of adding, that in fact one of his sons (the cousin-german of Madame Manson) is the young poet, whose works have succeeded on almost all our principal theatres.

those who sought her came armed, we found the means of comprehending, of compassionating, of hearing her. In one of these conversations, in which the learned Abbé P. shewed himself so worthy of his ministry, embarrassed with the explanation of some particulars, with questions which arose between us, with facts which were not satisfactorily accounted for, we requested of her to recount her own story. She hearkened to us with tears: confirmed by additions to this recital, the truth which we had supposed, and then imparted to us the MS. which you this day publish. Charged to submit it to her mother, before causing it to be printed, I brought it back to Madame Manson, with the answer which she solicited from her only friend. If she swerved from the counsel which had been pointed out to her, by taking the previous advice of her father, it is for the reader to determine, after having perused this memoir, if she had a right to free herself from it, and if we ought to refuse, in the state of abandonment in which she was left, to concur in giving publicity to a writing advantageous to her misfortune, and perhaps also to justice and to truth.

I would make you exactly acquainted with Madame Manson. I discern no surer means than by citing her own sentiments upon her character, freely expressed in one of her letters, and to leave her thus in an unstudied attitude to judge of and to paint herself.

“You have a right to be very much astonished, Sir;” she wrote a few days since;* “you

* The 4th December.

doubtless looked for acknowledgements on my part in the most elegant phraseology : in place of that I have been almost as clumsy with you as with M. de Cazes.* Would you believe, that gratitude and fear produce sometimes the same effects on persons of sensibility. I am just about affording you demonstration of it : I am going to prove to you both that I know how to refine the use of speech, and that I am not always mute.

“ What do I not owe you, Sir? You have had the goodness to make a journey expressly to tranquilize me on account of my child ; you have seen my mother, my son, my brother ; you assure me of their constant love, and that they take the same interest in the poor recluse. I have passed one happy day in the last five months, and it is to you that I owe it ! You are arrived *à propos* to reconcile me to mankind, and to correct my misanthropy. However, I believe you gifted with great insight and penetration, you have not as yet seen me long enough to form to yourself an idea of my character. I have said that nobody understood me, and it is true. Scarcely do I know myself, and I daily study myself. I am myself astonished : I am inexplicable ; so says my mother. I do nothing like other people : it has been my lot to be unjustly accused ; and through the effect of pride ill understood, or if you like it better, of my *eccentricity*, I disdain to justify myself. I am capable of the most important efforts in order to oblige : nothing is so flattering to me as inspiring sentiments of gratitude. I rarely calculate on the

* Prefect of Tarn.

events which will result from an action that my heart prompts me to do, and it is rarely that I experience remorse. I always act without premeditation: in short, I am believed to have what is called a disordered head; at least they daily tell me so. I wrote lately to a person, that what was defective in my mien, might easily be found in my heart; but go seek it: what is once entered there, passes out no more.

“ My conduct in the trial about M. Fualdes appeared very extraordinary; I have nevertheless been actuated by the same motives: the discovery of the truth, the justification of my father, the preservation of my son; and here is every thing, I believe. I have deceived myself; I have missed the aim which I proposed to myself: it is not the only time, and it will happen to me yet again. Can an inconsiderate woman correct herself? Never; and I have not a hope of it.

“ I do not know how to recapitulate: endeavour to do it for me. I would see an analysis of my character that you should have prepared; you have the particulars; the *recapitulation* is with you.

“ You have asked, Sir, my commissions for Paris: I would desire a work, the title of which may be “ *A complete History of the Trial respecting M. Fualdes,*” with historical notes as to the principal personages who have figured in this affair; a new edition, revised, corrected, and embellished with a portrait, a *striking likeness* of Madame Manson. You will do me the pleasure to send it me, with the papers that you have promised me. You have told

me that you would furnish me with the means of acquitting myself to you; but, under a certain bearing, I defy you to do it.

* * * * *

“Take yourself away most expeditiously: we shall pass for conspirators; and your pity for an unfortunate will give you the air of an accomplice; they will at least believe that I have told you *my secret*, and you will be put in the inquisition. Adieu, Sir; do not forget the cell of Father Chabot. I am going to take my leave of you; my paper is finished; tell me if I have employed it well, and if your views are fulfilled, I will thank my tried instructor. Receive the assurances of my esteem.

“ENJALRAN M.”

Such is Madam Manson, serious and sober. To appreciate her gaiety, and that unshaken calm which she knew how to retain in the melancholy recesses of a prison, re-peruse the note, which forms at the commencement of this volume the *fac simile* of her writing, and the particulars which she added still more recently.*

“Your sojourn at Rodez has put many wise heads a wondering: for myself, I am more and more under a close confinement. I require the most rigorous secrecy, the most peremptory orders, in short, that a single line from my hand should not go abroad. Good God! how *fond of precaution* are those people! How is one to deceive them! My jailor is mad. I

* The 8th December.

tell him that I know every thing, in despite of his vigilance: he daily makes me domiciliary visits: he searches every where, imagining that you have left some sylph in my cell. I have told him that I wrote without paper, ink, or pen. Have I not studied the Turkish salam, and the Egyptian hieroglyphic? I have told him that I was a magician, and, what is still more droll, is, that he is persuaded of it. A woman, whose parents have been shut up in 1793, and who has followed them into their prison, has been educated in the art of deceiving jailors. For the rest, if mine occasionally grows angry, I do him justice; and he only does his duty. Concede to me this little paragraph in favour of my old turnkey; he is a valiant man, and I fancy him.

* * * * *

“ They have just told me that I am decidedly in the number of the accused; but this does not hinder my smiles; my judges will be more embarrassed than myself. They have come to ask me some questions regarding you: I have replied, that I had charged you with a request for my Lord Keeper of the seals. Have I told a falsehood? I write to you without too perfect an acquaintance with the means I shall use to convey my letter from hence; but angel or devil, somebody shall take charge of it.

“ Adieu, restorer of my gaiety; rely on my perfect esteem, and even on my attachment.

* * * * *

Endeavour to comprehend me. It matters little if I

am inexplicable to all the world, so that I am not so to my friends."

The *recapitulation* which Madame Manson mentions in one of these letters, will be superfluous to whoever will attentively read the lines which she has inscribed; every thing is there, and every thing is there most rigorously explained; but occasionally, perhaps, the reflection of the reader must arrive to the relief of the conclusions understood by the author. Let it not be forgotten, that a passionate impulse may lead such a character to make a false avowal, and to sustain it, in a private interview, by the impression which she pleases herself in producing. Let it not be forgotten, that the first step of the accused was to retract her absurd discourse as soon as justice demanded an account of it; for if Madame Manson is fallen into the contradictions of a nameless complaisance; if she has yielded to long pursuit, to the weakness of her courage and of her animal strength; in short, to the menaces which have, she says, been made to her against her son—it is proved that she is risen again from this imbecility; that she has never uttered a judicial falsehood, has never violated the faith of her oath.

We know that, owing to a universal prejudice, which appertains to the effervescence of a southern spirit, an entire town was on the instant persuaded that she had been present at a murder; and then to explain the importunity of two persons who charged her with it, it is sufficient to call to mind the self-conviction of the first, and the praiseworthy, but perhaps too ardent zeal, with which he was thus ani-

mated for the public good. For the second, what need is there to render his motives complex, and resort to them, as has been done, under the suspicion of being an accomplice, or of the union of pecuniary interests with one of the suspected. They have claimed belief of the innocence of this suspected person, by the sole motive that he was his friend; for one does not impute criminality to those whom one esteems. If M. Enjalran was a father, he was a magistrate; and convinced as a magistrate, he was able to prefer the triumph of what he called the truth, to the honor of his daughter, which was already so compromised. For this daughter (at the same time courageous and feeble), she has proved by her conduct, that she had surmounted all afflictions, except the inquisition of the mind, the moral rack, the torture of the heart.

She appeared at the sitting of the 22d of August; you shall see what proof she had to undergo! Terrific words escaped her; and in the sequel, when she was asked why she had cried out—“*Remove those assassins from my sight!*” “Why should I not have said it,” answered she, “if they caused me to appear in this condition before the accused, and if my delirium has seen in their bloody hands, a poniard?—This frightful illusion was fatal to them—Is it my fault, if *I have witnessed it?* Is it my fault, if they deny all credence to my calm and collected depositions, to gather the words of my phrenzy.—I am compelled to make a futile and unofficial declaration: it is adopted. Free, restored to the exercise of my conscience, I pass no longer but for a false witness. They believe the wanderings of my brain; they re-

fuse the statement of my collected reason. By what fatality have the convulsions of a woman, who twice fainted away, regulated the terrible verdict of a jury?"

One remark, which has been often made, and in trials not less striking than this, is the species of defence upon which the public conviction rests against every circumstance that emanates from an accused person, to whom the resources of the mind are admitted. Talent passes for stratagem, and every kind of eloquence for a snare; whilst they suffer themselves to be overcome by the allegations of an illiterate culprit, when these very allegations are given with the weightiest interest in the cause, *Missionier* had not found minds that revolted more from the belief that he was an accomplice, than Madame Manson, when she wished to prove that she was not a witness.*

To conclude, I am not armed with the means of justifying all the acts, and all the colourings in the conduct of Madam Manson: this would be undertaking more than she can do herself: I only wish to put her intention succinctly in action; a more able defender will finish this task. I do not deny to myself the idea, that she bears a character, at the least extraordinary, on that very ground where nothing, perhaps, but a steady and ample good faith was re-

* It is especially during the revolution that these examples were too frequent. When Vergniaud appeared before his judges, he pronounced a calm and admirable discourse, before abandoning his life to them. The effect of his eloquence was to enrage the auditors, and some of the spectators said, "*what a cunning rascal is that, and what good grounds they have to condemn him.*"

quisite. The desire of a certain celebrity may, for some short time, have possessed her.

But, if after drawing a moral line, with every geometric rigour, you said, such is the path which it is proper to follow, you will easily perceive how Madame Manson has wandered from it. However, it is just to bear in mind, that one cannot expect from the weakness and from the inconsistency of a terrified woman, what a man, of determined spirit and stoical mind, might have done.

I have refrained from making the smallest alteration in the original digest of her recital, though she had given me entire liberty to make corrections in it; only where I have judged some slight annotations indispensable, I have annexed them without attaching the responsibility of them to her.

As, in contempt of the claims of her misfortune, false sentiments and false statements are daily attributed to her, I declare to you that she insists that every precaution should be employed to guarantee the authenticity of her confessions. Her manuscript is in her own writing; it does not contain a single word which is not penned by her own hand. You will be so good as to have it copied, read over, and collated, and take the trouble of depositing the original with one of the notaries at Paris.*

For myself, Sir, whilst you execute this delicate commission, I repair to Albi, where the witnesses, the advocates, the accused, and their judges are al-

* The intention of Madam Manson has been scrupulously fulfilled: we have entrusted her manuscript to M. Vienot, notary, Rue des Prouvaires, No. 38.

ready assembling, with a numerous concourse of spectators, in order to continue to transmit you from thence, for the public, with our habitual exactness, all the records of this terrible drama.

THE PARISIAN STENOGRAPH.

4th January, 1818.

*Rodez, from the Prison of the Capuchins.**December, 1817.*

“ IT is to the tenderest of mothers, to the most faithful of friends, that I will state the truth; she alone, will probably believe and appreciate it; she alone will have known how to preserve herself from a fearful prejudice.

“ Listen to me, my dear mamma, compassionate me, excuse me, I have no interest in deceiving you, I derive important benefits from imparting to you the truth, those of solacing my heart; and, in making choice of you for my guide, obtaining your advice. Why have I not earlier sought it! I should not have so greatly erred.

“ Behold my history: I do not relate it in a couple of words, for I am going to refer to events long passed. I have time to do it: and if I enter into some minuter details, certain of interesting you, as I have written but for you, my task will be fulfilled.

“ You know that I came to dwell at Rodez towards the middle of the month of October, of last year. I passed all my time with the family of Pal, which is entirely composed of respectable and quiet persons; I scarcely went abroad but to go to Olemps, to church, and to Madame Constans, the milliner, who supplied me with all I wanted. I was in her shop one day,

when I perceived a man enter, whose face was unknown to me; he assumed so free and so licentious an air with this woman, that he obliged me to withdraw hastily without completing my purchases.

“ When I had occasion to see Madame Constans again, she informed me that the person, who had so much displeased me, was, the aid-de-camp of General de Wautré, and a staunch royalist. ‘ All this,’ said I, ‘ does not prove against his having been very badly brought up, and having a very vulgar demeanour.’ I have no doubt that these words were repeated to him; Madame Constans is sufficiently indiscreet to have done it.

“ We were then at the end of January. I left Rodez to repair to my dear mamma, where I remained till the fair of mid lent.* The curate of Crespins had given me hopes, that at this period perhaps, he could effect a reconciliation between my husband and me. I left you with this hope. How fallacious was it!

“ The day of this memorable fair, Edward —† proposed to me to go and pass the evening at Madam Seconds’, where the ladies De Fermi were to be.—I consented to it, and it was agreed that my brothers should come for me at eight o’clock. It is a rule with the family of Pal, to shut the gates at ten. Their lodgers were subject to this restraint, which inconvenienced me but little, because I never went out in

* The 17th of March, the evening but one before the assassination of M. Fualdes,

† One of her brothers: the second is called Gustavus.

the evening. In going to Madame Seconds', I remarked, that they would not wait a minute for me, and that I should find a bed, if it was too late when we broke up. Edward and Gustavus accompanied me: the party was very gay, there was an assembly of young women and of young men; they sung and played at different games: when it struck ten, Edward said to me, 'Be easy, you shall sleep at the hotel of Princes.'

"My last request had been, to pass the night in a chair, conversing with him; I have passed more painful ones, and it is not yet finished. A short time after, Madame de Firmi, who appeared to me too much wedded to early hours, wished me good night, and went away. We followed her. They were not gone to bed at Pal's: I knocked, and they opened the door to me. My brothers, on taking leave of me, assured me that we should see each other again: indeed, they returned at 2 o'clock the next day.

"In entering my apartment, Edward told me, that he had just seen Maraye in Fontana's shop; that her intention was to go shortly, and take Madame Balsa to walk with her, to Foral. My brother, therefore, who sought a pretext to accompany these ladies, begged me to dress myself, and to go and wait for him at Madame Seconds'. I was not very anxious to go out, because it was cold: still, I told Edward, that I would come shortly. I went to Madame Seconds': I found her alone with her son-in-law. I could not understand where her daughter had gone to: Balsa told us, that he was going to put himself in trim to

conduct Josephine* to Madame Bonald's, and to Madame de Nattes's. Hence, I collected, that he was going to make a round of visits, and I said to myself—adieu to the walk! As to myself, I was but little vexed at it, I preferred the good fire of the parlour where I was, to the north wind which was blowing on that day, and which I should have had at Foral, at the first purchase. I sat down in an arm-chair, determined to wait very patiently the result of my rendezvous. I chatted with Madame Seconds, who told me that her daughter would not be long in returning, and that her visits would be short. I heard the clock strike five: 'Oh,' said I, 'this time it is too late for walking: the sun is taking his leave of us, I am going to take my leave of you too.' I took my leave, and shut myself up at home. I saw my brothers no more: I know not what became of them all day.—The next day, the 19th,† I was told that they had been seen passing through our street during the morning, and that they had afterwards, about four o'clock, gone to Le Perrié.

“ In the evening, I went down into the kitchen, whilst they supped: I seated myself near the fire, and commenced knitting. At half-past seven, there was a knock at the door; it was M. Muret, a merchant of Saint-Géniez. As he perceived that they were still at table, he made a sign that he might not disturb them, and said he would return the next day. I passed the rest of the evening with the Pals, till ten o'clock, when I retired to bed, after having heard

* Madame Balsa.

† The day of the murder.

a pious exhortation, and joined in the evening prayers with the family. The reality of this fact is as incontestable as that of your tenderness for your daughter; it is for you, my dear mother, to judge if I speak the truth.

“ On the following day, the 20th, I went into the kitchen to take a coffee-pot, and this circumstance is perhaps not unworthy of being remarked by you. I saw Madame Thérondel, who said to me; ‘ Have you not heard the news? They have found a man drowned in the Aveyron.’ I answered her, that for some time past, they talked of nothing but disasters, and that our department was particularly famous in this way. It was near seven o’clock.

“ I went up again into my room: in about an hour, one of the children of the house came to tell me, that the dead person was M. Fualdes—‘ Ah! so much the worse,’ said I, ‘ he was spoken of as a good man.’ I had only once seen him, at his estate at Serres: he loaded my mother and myself with politeness. I made haste to go down in order to receive more full information. M. Muret was in the kitchen with M. Pal; they spoke of the murder; but they were yet entirely ignorant of particulars. The rumour of a suicide already began to be circulated, and they talked idly upon this subject—I returned to my apartment: I was taking my dinner, when the little Pals called me to go and see the corpse, which had been taken out of the water. I exclaimed: ‘ I will not go there; the figure would re-appear to me at night, and I should be alarmed’—Oh! said they, every body is going there—In fine, said I, we will go there.

“ We took the road by the mill of Bessés. As we were not well acquainted with the way, we proceeded for a long time before being able to pass the river, and we arrived after they had placed the body of the unfortunate Fualdes upon a litter. His head was covered by the skirt of his coat, which they had thrown over it. I confess, that I did not then feel all the interest about him, with which he has since inspired me: I was ignorant of the nature of his death; and as he was already suspected of having provoked it, I accompanied the corpse without being much affected. If I had assisted the evening before at his horrible murder, could I have had strength to witness the next day, the removal of his unhappy remains. I, who after an interval of more than five months, have dropped down at the sight of the table where they pretend that he was dispatched.—I fainted on entering the house of Bancal, an incontestable proof of my presence in that house the 19th of March.—What fine proofs!

“ I return to my recital. On the road, I enquired from some of the gendarmes, if they had found any money about M. Fualdes; they told me they had not, adding, that a person dressed in a green coat, had called him to the club-house about eight in the evening, and that he had not been seen any more. In reaching the town, I met D'Hauterive, who was walking very fast. I stopped him; he recognized me, and told me that his wife was at Gombert's,* and that he was about departing. I told him that I wished to

* The keeper of the bowling-green.

see her, and we descended the Ambergue. In going along, I asked him if he had been informed that M. Fualdes had been found in the Aveyron: he answered me,—‘ Well! what do you wish that I should do in it.’

“ On entering the inn, I found Madame d’Hauterive employed in arranging her portmanteau; she told me, that she should have departed with regret if she had not seen me: that her husband had been unable to find my lodging; yet a moment after, she added, that she had passed the evening at my father’s till ten o’clock. It might have been the fountain head for informing herself where I lived.

“ We hardly spoke about the murder. M. and Madame d’Hauterive departed in about an hour. It was very bad weather: I made the observation to them: they assured me that they were in haste.—On regaining my house, I was told that one Lacueille, of Mur-de-Barrez, was suspected of having murdered M. Fualdes, because his father, who was indebted to him, had been arrested for a considerable sum, and that he could not clear off his debt to him. After some time, De Bastide was spoken of: but there are so many De Bastides in the world! I trembled at the idea, that it might be a relation of Madame Pons.

“ Towards evening, I took up my pen to give you some particulars of this event: but I found myself every instant making new alterations, which caused me to lay aside my letter, and to wait for better information. Disconcerted at being able to pick up nothing but vague reports, I went to Madame

Dornes,* hoping to hear something more satisfactory. I found this lady in the square of L'Olmet, chatting with Madame Tieulat. You guess what was the subject of their conversation. I asked them some questions: they assured me that they knew no more of it than I did. One of the young ladies André, who dropped in, informed us that they had been searching a suspicious house, in the Rue des Hebdomadiers: that they had found blood in it, and that the magistrate had taken possession of the keys: here is the sum of what I learnt this day, the 20th. The 21st, I was told that Bastide-Gramont had been examined the evening before, but that he was not arrested. The 22d, which was Sunday, as I returned from mass, Madame Pal said to me, 'Do you wish to see poor Bastide de Gros, whom they accused of having killed M. Fualdes; he is purchasing a hat at Acquier's.' I stepped out of the gate, the shop of the hatter was opposite, I could distinguish the person who was pointed out to me as Gramont Bastide: I examined him, and on re-entering, I told my hostess, that she was deceived: that I knew him well, and that it was his brother Louis who was married at La Montagne, near Vezins. On this, a violent discussion arose between Madame Pal and me; and justice requires, that I should state the fact; we could have taken an oath, she that Gramont had purchased a hat at Acquier's, and I, that it was his brother: see what mistakes people make.

"On Monday, the 23d, I went to Madame Con-

* Her cousin, the sister of M. Amans Rodat.

stans. *Rose Pierret* entered shortly after me. I had a very slight acquaintance with her, but still I had seen her before your illness. Rose appeared extremely affected with the murder of M. Fualdes: she spoke of it to us with great emotion. 'It is horrible,' she repeated, 'they cut the unhappy man's throat on a table, with a wretched knife: the foot of the table was broke: they put him upon it again: he requested an instant to commend his soul to God. No, replied Bastide, brutally; he must die! They will secure all these wretches, or heaven would not be just.' Such was the language that Rose Pierret held to us. I acknowledge that the idea did not then strike me, that she might have been at Bancal's house during this frightful tragedy, and it was not till long after, that I had conceived suspicions of this adventure.

"I was at Olemps on Tuesday evening: Amans had left it in the morning, for the fair of Espalion. Madame Rodat was alone with William,* 'Well,' said she to me, as far off as she could perceive me, 'you are doing fine things at Rodez.' Yes, I told her, we render ourselves illustrious. Sophy demanded of me the particulars: I gave her those which I had from Rose Pierret, and which, following the words of Amans, denote *an eye-witness*:—retain this fully, my dear mamma.

"Rose Piérret had made use of one expression which is offensive to our language; she had said, 'The assassins were eager to persuade the public, that M. Fualdes was *destroyed by himself*, but providence has not permitted it.' William told me, that

* Her brother.

he had heard the beauty and the wit of Rose much extolled: 'for the rest,' he observed, 'one may be very amiable, and speak bad French.' Amans returned from Espalion: he had been there with your cousin Régis-Delbosc. On the road, they met Jausion and Bastide, who were going to Rodez: they stopped with them an instant. Bastide wished to joke untowardly enough with Rodat, who answered in a frigid tone, and said to Régis when they were alone, 'Here is a man who goes all the way to Rodez to have himself arrested.' For this time your nephew was a prophet: Bastide went to take up his bed in prison.

Some weeks afterwards, the little Pals proposed to me to go the almonry to see their sister, who is now a nun at Nevers. One of the ladies of the sisterhood told me that Bancal's children had made important discoveries concerning the affair of M. Fualdes; I expressed some wish to see them; they were brought into our presence, and I put various questions to them, to which they made no reply. Little Alexis, a boy of three years old, repeated what every body was then in possession of. Madeline said, that her brother was but a child, that he ought not to be listened to; that for herself she had neither seen or heard any thing, and that the murder had not been committed at her father's house.

Jausion was arrested the 7th of April: as were his wife and her sister the following day. About the middle of this month, you sent in search of me, and I repaired to Perrie, where I informed you that Bancal had poisoned himself; the report of it was actu-

ally current in the city. A little time after we ascertained that he was dead.

I returned to Rodez on the 18th of May. I had often occasion to meet Rose Pierret again, either at Madame Constans's shop, or at that of the Guyons; where, in passing, I sometimes stopped to enquire the news. Rose continually brought up the affair of Fualdes; she appeared concerned that the accused were tried at another place than Rodez, and repeated to me, that there were two of them whom they had not taken. Yet all this did not cause me to suspect that she might know more than she had said concerning it.

“The entire month of June passed without our acquiring any fresh information. You arrived at Olemps on the 29th, and you have not forgotten the important conversation which you held with us some days after; it was on the subject of the deposition of Bousquier. Some one had told me, that this person, who was included in the accused, had actually deposed to his belief of having seen Jausion in Bancal's kitchen; and he added, ‘I know it from an authentic quarter, I have it from one of the judges.’ I then observed to my cousin, that I credited the existence of the deposition, but I could not engage to him for its veracity. He either heard me imperfectly, or I expressed myself in an indistinct manner; this is the case with me occasionally, and serious consequences result from it.

“I shall not speak to you, my dear mamma, of the moment of our separation, which was very melancholy: you departed, carrying my son with you. In

bidding you adieu, I perceived you shed tears ; which made me presume you were actuated by alarming forebodings.

“ During the summer, I had seen *M. Clémendot* at church, when he affected to regard me with an attention that was disagreeable. I did not fail to change my place when I found myself near him. One day, as I was at my window, he stopped to salute me : I wore the appearance of not having noticed it. There came after a time some comedians to Rodez, and an evil genius which had vowed my destruction, inspired me with so violent a passion for the theatre, that I could not resist the desire of going there.—I took a ticket.

“ I now feelingly lament this first error, the source of so many misfortunes !——but the time is passed. *M. Clémendot* seldom missed the performances : one evening when there were not many people in the first boxes, he saw a vacant place near me, and seated himself in it ; he soon entered into conversation, spoke much to me of *Sophie Miquel*, extolled her beauty, her shape, her elegance, and finished by requesting me to permit him to offer me his arm to conduct me home again. I thanked him, adding, that having come with the General and his nieces,* I should return back with them : which I did. The General had no lantern : I was in some difficulty to procure myself a light, when we saw a person following us, who carried one : I begged him to let me have the use of it, and recognized *M. Clémendot*,

* *M.* the Major-General Viala.

who had designedly followed us, for the Rue de Touat is not the way to pass from the theatre to the house of Bousquet Chaudon, where I have since learnt he lodged. The General lighted the wax-taper which I had in my ridicule, and took leave of me, as did also his nieces and M. Clémendot. The next day I thought no more of all this, when Edward arrived, who gave me accounts of you and my son; I had great pleasure in seeing him; we conversed a long time. When he left me he promised to return in less than an hour, to conduct me to the promenade; I waited for him more than three. I had little doubt where he was gone; I conceived that the society of an amiable woman would make the time appear very short, and that in such cases there is an excuse for forgetting a sister. I, therefore, repaired to Rose Pierret's. Edward was not there; I wished to return from thence, Rose detained me, and with a mysterious air, said, 'If you wish to see your brother, stay here.'——'But you have spoken with him then?'—She made me no answer. I pretended to be displeased, and she then admitted that Edward had certainly passed some time at her house, and that he was to return at eight o'clock to take her a walk to Foral, where I should also go, he said.

"I told Miss Pierret that I would return home to fetch my shawl, and that I would leave word for my brother at the Hotel des Princes, that I should wait for him at her house. Rose said I was right, and proposed our partaking of some sweetmeats, on our return from walking. I went out, and did not delay returning. Edward followed me very shortly: we

set out ; it was beautiful weather, and the walks were soon filled with company. My brother, as usual, made observations which afforded us much diversion : we walked for about an hour, we several times crossed by eight or ten persons whom we were unacquainted with, when one of this group, detached himself from it, and advancing towards us, saluted my brother, addressing him by his name. ‘ Ah ! Clémendot, is it you ? ’ said Edward, ‘ and pray who were you with ? ’ He answered, that he was walking with the ladies Moze, Rafenau, and others : that he thought he recognized us, and wished to assure himself of it. ‘ But Enjalran,’ said he, addressing himself to my brother, ‘ you cannot give both arms, allow me to offer mine to your sister.’ Edward released my arm ; and as I was in a disposition to be gay, I accepted that of M. Clémendot.

“ After some turns in the walks, Edward asked him if he should soon depart. ‘ The day after to-morrow,’ said he, ‘ I have a hundred visits to make, what a bore ! I shall come and take leave of you, Madam,’ he said to me, in a very low voice. ‘ Surely,’ I replied, ‘ you are inclined to pleasantry ? I yesterday spoke to you for the first time ; and then I receive nobody.’—‘ I think you are too polite to deny me admittance.’—‘ Do not trust to it.’—‘ I will make the attempt,’ added he,—‘ Indeed,’—I then told him, you will be losing your time.’ Edward, as well as his companion, walked very fast. I perceived that M. Clémendot moved very gently along. I taxed him with it ; he excused himself on the ground of having corns, which he said

gave him great uneasiness. ‘In this case you did wrong to hook yourself upon us, who are travelling post.’ He testified his regret at not having been sooner able to make so charming an acquaintance as that of Madam Manson, whose wit and elegance were extolled by every one. ‘Add also her beauty,’ said I, breaking out into a laugh, ‘in order that nothing may be wanting to the portrait.’ I kept speaking to him constantly in a tone of pleasantry; obliging him, however, to double his pace, in order to overtake Rose and my brother, who on their part were entertaining each other very gaily.

“It was late; I proposed our retiring, which was agreed to. On entering the town, Edward said that he was dying with thirst, and had a great mind to go and drink a glass of beer.—‘Come into the house,’ said Miss Pierret to us, ‘we shall find some very good; and then,’ said she, turning round to me, ‘your sister has made an engagement to taste my sweetmeats.’ I felt more under the influence of sleep than of hunger. I suffered myself nevertheless to be carried along, and we went up to Rose’s, who set some excellent current jelly before us, which had not the effect of giving me a pain in my stomach, because I eat of it through complaisance. It was not the same case with the aid-de-camp, who helped himself to large platefulls, and swallowed down immense spoonfulls without any bread: any body else would have burst from it, but unhappily for me it did not gorge him.

“Edward, who is always full of jests, had on this evening a more than ordinary dose of mirth; he made

me laugh so much at the expense of poor Clémendot, that it ended with my seriously fearing that he might perceive it, and be displeased at it; but, nothing of the kind; instead of it, he commenced singing.— He said to us every now and then, lisping: ‘are we for a turn to Foral?’—‘Ah, and the corns,’ said I, Edward did not hear him, and thought no more of retiring. ‘Let us take a turn to Foral,’ said M. Clémendot again. He repeated this for the twentieth time, when Edward, after having reflected a moment, said to us, ‘ladies, the weather is beautiful, I will look for a carriage: let us go and breakfast at Espalion, we shall eat some delicious trout.’ I asked my brother if he had lost his wits, and if he had forgot that it would take five hours to reach Espalion from Rodez. ‘It matters not,’ said he, ‘we shall be back here in good time to-morrow.’ Rose, from apprehension of her father, who was to arrive in the morning, did not coincide with Edward. After a vigorous resistance, he was obliged to capitulate. My brother proposed to us to go only to the barracks at Flavin, assuring us that we should be back again before seven o’clock, and that M. Pierret would not then be in town! Sleep had entirely passed from me; I joined with Edward, in order to decide Rose, promising her, that if her father became acquainted with the adventure, I would take every thing on myself.

“M. Clémendot made no observation: he appeared neither disconcerted, or pleased with our arrangements: he followed us however to Saint Pierre’s, where we went to order a carriage.

“Your son, who gave the orders in his character of

adjutant-major,* was instantly obeyed. We set off a little before day-break; it began to appear as we passed *la Mouline*. Rose was no sooner in the carriage, than despair took possession of her. I thought she was going to jump over the boot: she had the air of a victim who is going to be sacrificed, but she had to deal with pitiless ravishers. Far from being touched by her grief, they only answered it with peals of laughter. Edward was so full of drollery, that Rose forgetting Rodez, her father, and all her alarms, concluded by laughing as heartily as the rest of us.

“Our conductor drove us at a great rate: we arrived at Flavin at half past four. Edward had thought of eating part of a goose; he had reckoned without his host: it was Saturday; and M. Blanc does not think that a man who has had his feet frozen, should on that account be released from observing the sixth commandment of the church. They gave us eggs, salad, and cheese. As we had not slept, we called for coffee, which I believe was boiled in the frying-pan. They rummaged out an old bit of sugar, the colour of yellow wax, which the officers contended for. In vain they called for liqueurs; the host, never losing sight of prudence, told us that he kept none because of the rats.†

“At last, after being very indifferently regaled, we remounted the carriage, to the great satisfaction of Rose, who was in constant dread of finding her father at his house.

* He has filled this post in the old guard.

† Of the cellar apparently.

“ Edward entertained us during the journey with his adventures in the towns where he had passed. M. Clémendot, who wished to put on the air of the favorite of the fair, imparted to us his successes with the ladies of Rodez, whose favors he had obtained, in order cruelly to abandon them. He instances Madam such-a-one, whose favors he had despised; another, who was disconcerted the moment he appeared: he compelled that one to cast down her eyes in his presence; the husband of this had surprised them; and as the Marquis in Marmontel's tales would say, ‘*at a critical moment.*’ ‘Oh!’ repeated he, ‘I have done speaking of myself; ill betide the woman; when I wish to have her!’—‘Hold,’ said Edward, ‘he would persuade us, if we had not seen him. A pretty young fellow to turn the heads of the belles! Only look at him, ladies.’

“ You must know, my dear mother, that M. Clémendot is extremely ugly; but it is requisite I should give you his portrait. In the first place, he is what we call in our country, *beffé*;* he has an enormous mouth, a most wicked nose, squinting eyes, a sallow complexion, a bald head, and he speaks through his nose. Now let us come to his stature, which is very little higher than mine; I avail myself of a comparison of Edward's, in speaking of his slender limbs; and I find that those of M. Clémendot are not badly likened to two barrels of a fusee; add to this the very extreme of short inexpressibles, and black stockings: but of what consequence is his person, if the mind

* Having the lower jaw very protuberant.

was worth any thing? Here, my dear mamma, is a faint sketch of the person, who is called M. Clémendot; to whom, according to the world, I have made the most important discoveries; to whom I have confided a secret, which I was unwilling to reveal to justice, in spite of the inquisitorial measures which they have employed for that purpose for the last four months.

“ We arrived at Rodez early: these gentlemen left us at the lower end of the side of *the Cordeliers*; I accompanied Rose as far as her father’s house, who was not as yet arrived, and who has not arrived to this day: he sent to her to come and join him in the country. Regaining my own house, I threw myself on my bed, where I slept for some hours. They made no doubt in the family that I had passed the night abroad. About two, Edward entered, and told me that he was going to Saint Pierre’s with M. Clémendot. ‘ Harkee,’ added my brother, ‘ I shall not depart till towards evening; I wish to go to Rose’s, to take leave of her; you will be there—I wish it much.’ We placed ourselves for an instant at the window; Edward said to me, ‘ I must go away: I’ll take a bet that Clémendot is in search of me:—stay,’ said he, ‘ look at him passing along the street.’ I observed that he was very gaily dressed; he had a very fine frill, silk breeches, gold buckles: but after all it was the same figure.

“ My brother called to him; and on entering he took full possession of a chair, before I had a thought of offering him one. Edward told him, that he did not care about taking repose: that he must go to

Saint Pierre's. 'Well,' said M. Clémendot, 'you may very well go there without me: I am tired; it is so extremely hot; I can do no more.' As I saw that he sought a pretext for remaining alone with me, I said, 'I am going out, and give my company to no one.' This manner of explaining myself was understood by M. Clémendot, who required no more entreaties to accompany Edward.

"I went a little after to Rose's: she had made herself in readiness to go into the country. After a short interval, Edward dropt in; the everlasting Clémendot was with him: they came up stairs together; but my brother, who grew tired of his company, said to him, 'go about your business; you carry matters too far.' The seriousness of this apostrophe disconcerted the poor aid-de-camp, who thought fit to retire.

"In the evening my brother told us that he was going to seek for his horse. An instant afterwards I placed myself at the window, and I saw a man whom they were conducting to execution. 'How can you remain there?' said Rose to me. 'Oh! very well,' I replied. 'Must one pity him so much? It is doubtless a murderer. See, he has on a red gown. I should see the murderers of the unfortunate Fualdes pass by thus, with equal composure.'

"There was a great crowd before the Cordeliers to see Jausion, who was on this day examined. Edward came to tell us, that he had seen him in the street, and that Jausion was very pale. 'I should fear to see him,' said Rose, 'he gives me strange inquietude: I am sorry for him: I would not wish to be at

Rodez if he was executed.' I am at this moment persuaded, that if Miss Pierret was present at the murder, she owes her life to Jausion; or rather, not having seen him, she regrets his being accused. I am well disposed to believe, that the gentleman of middle height, whom Bousquier has taken for Jausion, was another person. We saw Edward again, who wished us good evening, without dismounting from his horse: he had again seen M. Clémendot; they had embraced, and taken leave of each other for a length of time, because the aid-de-camp was to depart with his general on the evening of the following day, for a very remote department. I remained still for some time at Miss Pierret's: she had a small white veil, such as that which I worked at the expense of the point of my needle. 'Ah! Ah! exclaimed I, you adopt my fashions.' She did not say any thing particular in answer to me, and passed into the room, where her chest of drawers was open. There was in it a large black veil, such as the Spanish women wear. I put it on my head.—'It is very pretty,' said I to Rose, 'where have you bought it?'—'At Paris.'—'Have you been to Paris? It must have cost you a good deal of money,'—'Ah! indeed, a good deal.' She snatched the veil with some haste: threw it into the drawers, and shut them. Her manner surprised me. I was then ignorant that there had been a female veiled at Bancal's house, on the 19th of March. I could not then entertain a suspicion respecting Rose: but it is true that her air of embarrassment, in speaking to me of her veil, surprized me at the moment.—I left Miss Pierret at 6 o'clock, and saw her again no more

till in the sitting of the 8th of September, at the court of judicature. Having returned home, I supped and was desirous to retire to bed early, when I heard a gentle knock at my door, and perceived M. Clémendot enter. It was late. I requested him to retire: he told me that he was in no hurry. On no account in the world should I have wished my hostess to see a man in my apartment at the approach of night. She might come in every instant. After having reflected, I resolved on going out of my room, and leaving M. Clémendot alone. That was fortunate: in about an hour I returned. I searched into every corner, and after being assured that nobody was there, I doubly turned the lock, and went to bed.

“Next day, as I returned from mass, one of my female neighbours said to me:—‘You have had a visit from the General’s aid-de-camp this morning.’—‘Me?’ said I, ‘how! I conversed with him for the first time, at the play, last Thursday!’—‘It does not signify,’ she replied, ‘if he was not going away, he would lay himself out to pay court to you, and to bring your honour in question: you would not be the first woman made notorious by him.’ I assured her that this man occasioned me no apprehension.

“In the afternoon I heard the sound of boots in the corridor which leads to my room, and somebody rapped twice in the space of half an hour. I dressed myself, and did not deem it proper to make any answer. Some time after I called Madame Lacombe,* and requested her to go to Madame Constans’s, and

* Her hostess.

buy me a sash. I forgot to shut my door inside: I heard a knock again. I sprung up to turn the key, but I had not time to do it, and *the man who is not a Sir Charles Grandison*, abruptly entered. I was, however, on the threshold of the door: my head became giddy at the idea, that my hostess was about to return, and that she would find me. I had so terrified an appearance, and made such earnest intreaties to him, that he consented to withdraw.

“Madame Lacombe was not long in returning. She told me that an officer had come, about an hour ago, who had asked her for Madame Manson, and that she told him I was gone out. ‘I believe,’ added Madame Lacombe, ‘that it is your brother: he stopped for a moment at the door, bit his nails, and then went away.’—‘My brother,’ said I, ‘departed yesterday. If the gentleman, you speak of, returns, tell him I am not here: with the exception of my father, I wish to see no one.’

“I went to the play with the ladies Miquel. They played *Joconde*, or *les Coureurs d’Aventures*. I was very attentive to the music of this opera, which is pretty, when, between the acts, my eyes glanced towards the pit. I perceived M. Clémendot, who disappeared almost immediately. The curtain which drew up at this moment presented to my view new objects, which made me forget this singular apparition. At the end of the last piece, I heard a noise behind me; I turned round, and I again saw M. Clémendot, who made a sign of vengeance to me, and went out.

“I paid little attention to his menaces, and retired

very placidly to my house. In about a quarter of an hour I went into the corridor to look for some water, when I opened my door, I was nearly falling backwards on perceiving M. Clémendot, who came into my room, compelled me to enter it with him, and locked the door. I should have called up the house, but my adversary was little to be dreaded, and then was I to make a ridiculous eclat in Rodez, where so little is requisite to render oneself a subject of common talk? (Alas! I divined it much better in the sequel. None can avoid their destiny.)

“ It is from this horrible night, that my misfortune may be dated. What were all the vexations which I have endured during life, compared to those which for the last five months have overwhelmed me? what tears have I shed!—Oh! my father, my mother, my brothers, my son! dear and sacred ties which alone attach me to life, without you, without a residue of religion, I should have freed myself from this painful existence.—In the other world, they will no more speak to me of the trial respecting M. Fualdes.

“ There had been a great supper at General de Wautré's; M. Clémendot was at it, and played a very good part, as he is accustomed to do. He could not support himself, and tottered at every step. He approached me, and endeavoured to embrace me; I pushed him back to the other extremity of the chamber. I persuaded him to retire, he told me that I lost my time, that he should not go away till three o'clock, the moment when the General would set off; he added that he felt a desire to sleep. In truth he

yawned exceedingly, and fell asleep, or made a show of sleeping. During this time I reflected on my situation, which was a very singular one; not, as I have said, that I was afraid of M. Clémendot; for it is pretended that in departing from Rodez he carried with him bitter recollections; he passed for a debauchee, a drunkard, and for being loaded with debts. I had learnt this in the morning: and they even added that his creditors wished before his departure, to give him a good acquittance on his shoulders. When the aid-de-camp had slept half an hour, I again entreated him to retire. He told me that he knew something extremely interesting, and that he would confide it to me. ‘You must know that the report in the town is, that there was a female at Bancal’s house, during the murder: some say ’tis Miss Avit.’ I interrupted him, in order to declare that I did not believe Miss Avit capable of being in so bad a place, and that besides, they would not have suffered a witness of the murder, who might have been able to publish the authors of it. ‘Many persons have maintained,’ said he, ‘that you had given some one a rendezvous there.’ ‘Ah! I shall not fail finding myself implicated in the affair of M. Fualdes.’— ‘They add,’ said M. Clémendot, once more, ‘that at the time you were in the house, the woman Bancal, hearing people approaching, concealed you in a place where you could see and hear every thing.’

“I fixed an earnest look upon him: he continued, —‘It was indeed you! Come, confess that it was you.’—‘Oh! assuredly,’ said I, ‘it was myself.’— ‘Ill starred woman. How interesting this renders

you in my eyes ; it is said that Bastide wished to kill you, and that Jausion saved your life. If you were aware of the interest which I have in this affair ! if you were aware of it ! if you could comprehend all the interest which I have in this affair !'

" I made no doubt that he was either out of his wits, or at the least drunk. The sleep which he had on entering, confirmed me in this idea : he spoke very loud. I begged him to lower his voice ; he then betook himself to singing. I gave him some chocolate to make him silent, and at last persuaded him to go away.

" I carefully closed the gate at the entry, which sometimes remained open on account of the different lodgers ; and, besides, was so badly closed, that in pushing it it flew open when the bolt was not made fast. It is by the knowledge of this circumstance, that I have accounted for the sudden apparition of M. Clémendot in the corridor ; he had taken care to be followed by one of his friends, whom he told, that he came to my house at midnight. This young man doubtless saw him enter the house in which I lived, at this hour : he was subpœned to depose to this fact ; but he has not appeared at the trial, thanks to the President, who has not thought that it could serve to the unfolding the affair of M. Fualdes.

" Tuesday, the 29th of July, about seven o'clock in the evening, a bailiff arrived and handed me a summons. ' You are under a mistake,' I told him, ' I have no suit at law with any person.' ' It is for that of M. Fualdes.'—' Still more out of the way ; what relation have I with M. Fualdes ? I know nothing

about it;’ the bailiff answered, ‘ give yourself the trouble to come to the court, M. Constant will explain it to you.’ I regretted it extremely; but he insisted on it. I was introduced into a hall, where I saw M. Constant, the judge, whom I did not know, and who received me with much politeness.

“ After the customary preamble, he caused me to be sworn. I trembled a little; it was my first oath, and it is not a trifling thing. At least I have not to reproach myself with being perjured. I have NEVER asserted before the court, that I was in Bancal’s house the 19th of March: my compliance will never carry me to this point.

“ They asked me what I knew of the murder of M. Fualdes: I answered with confidence, that I absolutely knew nothing. ‘ See,’ said M. Constant, addressing me, ‘ what rumours are raised; the report is current that you were at Bancal’s house.’—‘ And who has asserted this?’—‘ Oh!’ replied he, ‘ ’tis the rumour of the town.’

“ My interrogation was very short. I had nothing to depose. I had still time to go and take a short walk with the sisters of Madam Gourdon, one of whom had lately married M. Boyer. We were at the play together; a minute after I saw the ladies Miquel and their uncle enter; they seated themselves almost without saluting me. I was astonished at this caprice, and had no doubt some *underhand turn*,* had been done me with them, a common thing at Rodez. But it was a surprise of an entirely different

* A story at my expense.

character, when I perceived that the looks of all were fixed upon me, and that I was the object of general curiosity. Though I examined myself carefully, there was nothing ridiculous in my dress: they were in the habit of seeing me at the play. Suddenly I recollected my assignation, this was a flash of light. Oh! said I, in our great town very little is necessary to eke out matter for conversation. I turned towards M. Lacalmontie, who was behind me, and asked him, ‘on what authority it was spread through the town, that I was at Bancal’s on the 19th of March.’ ‘I know nothing about it,’ he replied. I still put some questions to him, I urged him. The General, who was by his side, losing his patience, told me in a very animated tone: ‘Madame, you have placed your secret in bad hands, it is now public. M. Clémendot is an indiscreet person; you should have chosen a better confidant.’ I looked at him with an air of consternation. With difficulty I had power to say a few words in my justification: but this was neither the place nor the moment for it. The curtain rose. I was shrunk into nothing: I should have preferred reciting the rosary, or even the longest office in the breviary, to being present at this opera, and I would have given all the world to have had the power of withdrawing without being perceived: but there were no means of doing so; and I was obliged to remain under the fixed gaze of every eye.

“This was only a prelude to the punishment that awaited me: M. Clémendot entered: I believed he had taken his departure: not a bit of it: it was indeed his intention, after having made his deposition:

but he was detained, and I had to undergo the confusion of being saluted by him, and of having him nearly close at my side during a part of the first piece. I constantly turned away, in order to avoid seeing him, which doubtless influenced him afterwards, to go and place himself in a box facing me; and without turning my back on the actors, I was condemned to see this odious figure, constantly directed towards me.

“ Never had a spectacle appeared so long to me. I made a vow, that I would never from that moment appear there during my life, and I will assuredly keep my engagement. When I went out, M. Clémendot had the audacity to approach and offer me his arm. My face was all on fire, I was ripe for giving way to my anger, and displaying a scene which would, perhaps, have been better for me; for they have reproached me with having observed too much respect towards this monster.

“ M. Boyer, his wife and sister-in-law, re-conducted me home: for this time, I did not forget drawing the bolt at the gate, and also doubly locking my own door. I approached the window, which was open; in the street I perceived a sort of shadow, which said to me, ‘ *Give me admittance.*’ I precipitately closed the window and the shutters; I lay down, but could not close my eyes. From this day I have been afflicted with fever; and believe it will quit me no more.

“ During the night, I had time for reflection; in the morning I arose, very melancholy and much exhausted. It was not yet eight o’clock, when I heard

a rap at my door: it was a fresh summons to repair forthwith to the court. I went there, and found at it the king's solicitor, M. Constant, and M. Clémendot, with whom they wished to confront me: on seeing me he was disconcerted, and made several fruitless efforts to assume an air of composure. For myself, I was almost suffocated with anger: but, well persuaded that passion would avail me nothing, I restrained myself, and put on a tranquil appearance. How often have I been upbraided on this account! It was necessary to insult the aid-de-camp, and snatch from his pate the few hairs that were left on it; I should then have clearly proved that he was an impostor. Bancal struck Bousquier with her fist, at the sitting of the 13th of September: she would have beat him soundly, if they had not put her in irons: is the world less persuaded on that account, that the murder had not been committed at her house?

“ M. Clémendot affirmed, that I had assured him I was at Bancal's house on the 19th March; I affirmed the contrary; I confined myself to telling him that stories sometimes cost dear, and that he had better be on his guard. We went out together; M. Avit, the registrar, offered to accompany me, which I accepted. M. Clémendot wished to follow us; I declared to him, in so resolute a tone of voice, that I should rather prefer being shut up in one of the dungeons of the Cordeliers, to entering the town in his company, that he troubled me no more, and quitted us.”

“ Scarcely had I regained my room, when M. Ju-

lien * entered it: 'I come,' said he, 'on the part of your father, who desires that you may have an interview with the Prefect.' 'Really,' I replied, 'I am unacquainted with M. d'Estourmel: what would they have me say to him? I know nothing concerning the business of M. Fualdes. If it is on this account that I am demanded, it is very useless that I should go and weary the Prefect.' 'Be easy,' said M. Julien: 'in a couple of hours I will come and take you; I will myself conduct you to the prefecture: your father is very much inclined that you should go there.'

"I made no reply: M. Julien begging me to dress myself, left me; such was my design. I had never in my life spoken to the Prefect; I bestowed great trouble on my toilet, in order to appear before our man, though he did not, I rather think, pay much attention to it. I did M. Destourmel an injury, in assimilating him with M. de Termont, relative to etiquette, to which the latter, it is said, greatly adhered. The Prefect has since seen me very often in a morning dress, and in a careless undress, and has certainly taken no exception on this account. M. Julien returned at ten o'clock; I was ready, but he told me, we had time for a little conversation. My father had charged him to tell me, that if I was at Bancal's house, in spite of the shame that would attach to making such an avowal, I owed it to justice to do so. That he would pardon me; that he would make me no reproaches, provided I admitted every thing. I protested to M. Julien, that I had slept at home the 19th

* One of the judges of the civil court of judicature at Rodez, an ancient colleague and friend of M. Enjalran.

March, and that I had not gone out all the evening. I offered to have all Pal's family cited to support my assertion. He told me, that in a town, one found difficulty in proving an *alibi*: that besides, there was no question as to that matter: that it was proved, that I was at Bancal's; that they had informations thereupon: in short, that the woman Bancal was executed, and that, if in her last testament she had lately declared, that I was at her house at the time of the murder, there could be no doubt that I should be proceeded against as an accomplice, on my denial.

“ Whatever I could do, I was unable to persuade M. Julien; he accompanied me to the Prefecture, and after the first compliments, he left me alone with the Prefect, who, of all the men that I have ever seen in my life, is the one who has impressed me with the most awe. I find myself timid in his presence, after having seen him at least sixty times; judge from this what I must have felt at the first interview! M. d'Estourmel received me with that grace, and that politeness, which characterize him: he employed the greatest gentleness to make me acknowledge that I was at Bancal's house: he assured me, that M. Clémendot had, in his deposition, spoken of me in the most respectful terms; that he was far from having held the language of which he was publicly accused; that, if I would admit the facts stated in this deposition, they would allow him to depart; that he demanded nothing so earnestly as to go and rejoin his General. ‘But,’ said I to the Prefect, ‘I have been told, that M. Clémendot had deposed, that I had mentioned Bastide and Jausion to him, whilst their

names never escaped from my mouth : that alone, is carrying these gentlemen to the scaffold ; five witnesses are to appear on the trial in support of M. Clémendot having declared this fact to them in a coffee-house ; I have it from one of them, who has clearly understood him : and after all this, no doubt is entertained of my having been actually present at the murder ; of Bastide having been desirous to cut my throat ; and of Jausion having saved my life.

“ The Prefect again assured me, that M. Clémendot had not mentioned all this story ; he returned to entreaties that I would make a confession to him ; he told me, that he had certain informations by him, which did not permit him to entertain the smallest doubt that I was acquainted with every thing ; that it would be infinitely more advisable to admit it ; that it was impossible that *a brave officer of the strictest honor*, had invented all this fabulous tale ; that I must lay my account to a serious affair between one of my brothers and him ; that, on the other side, my father was about bringing an action against him for calumny, and commencing a suit which would be the ruin of our family.

“ From the commencement I had foreseen one of these misfortunes, since I hastened writing to Gustavus to prevent Edward’s coming to Rodez. I also demanded my son of him, not doubting that they might threaten to deprive me of him for ever, if I did not make a confession. The sequel has clearly proved that my fears were well founded.

“ In my first interview with the Prefect, I continued very firm in supporting the truth : notwith-

standing, when I had returned home, and reflected on all the disasters which my denial brought with it, I imagined, ‘ Let me sacrifice myself: the testimony of my conscience will suffice; all the world will believe that I was in an infamous house; I alone shall know to the contrary; and, dishonoured in the eyes of an unjust public, my own esteem will at least be left me.’

“ Here, my dear mother, is the reasoning which I adopted; it is false, since you have found it so; but you were far from me; I had no time to consult you.

“ My resolution being taken, I sent to entreat M. Julien would come over to me. He came instantly. I told him, that if he had an engagement from my father not to reproach me with my conduct, to enter into securities to pay my allowance punctually; and, above all, not to compel me to live at Perrié, (it was simple enough that a mother and brothers might institute any vexatious proceedings for a miserable prostitute), I promised to state every thing to the Prefect. M. Julien assured me, he had no doubt of my father’s acquiescence in all my demands; but that not having a legal authority from him for treating with me, he would go and assure himself how he stood disposed towards me: that while I waited for him, I could write to the Prefect, to demand of him another audience.

“ He left me, saying he would soon return. I wrote the letter, No. II. inserted in the information,*

* The reader will feel obliged to us for placing these different papers before him.

to the Prefect. I had not finished, when M. Julien returned to tell me that my father accepted all my conditions. I sent my letter to the Prefecture. The Prefect returned answer that he was always ready to

No. II.

“ Sir,

“ I think I have discovered that you took a very lively interest in M. Clémendot : this consideration, joined to the fear of occasioning the spilling of blood, compels me to unveil to you this day a mystery impenetrable to all the world.—Yesterday it was impossible I could do it ; I was in a state which can bear no comparison : in vain have I wished to conceal it from you : you have seen how heavily I was oppressed. I will state the truth to you, Sir ; but will you deign to believe it ? May I rely upon secrecy ? This is most difficult : is not my deposition in the hands of the Judges ? Have I not signed it ? What will be my fate ? I know it not ; but the life of my brothers shall be no longer in danger : my father shall have no apprehensions of the loss of his fortune : in short, it is necessary to restore the honour of a brave officer ; what matters it that that of a woman should be compromised ? All the blame will fall heavy upon me : I am prepared for every event. What can befall me ? Am I not created for misfortune, and has not the measure of it for a long time past been completed ?

“ M. Clémendot desires to have an interview with me : I consent to it ; but permit it to be in your presence, and that I may discourse with you without witnesses. May Heaven grant me the power of speaking ! Can you believe me ? I do not expect it ; but at least I will occasion no person’s death. My life alone is perhaps in danger. Deign, Sir, to communicate to me the hour at which I may obtain audience. I venture to hope that my letter will only be known by yourself : excuse the disorder of it, and be pleased to accept the assurances of my respect and of my homage.—It is with these sentiments that I have the honour to be,

“ Sir,

“ Your very humble and most obedient servant,

“ E. MANSON.”

give me audience, and that my hour should be his—*that the sooner the better*: these are his own expressions: I have his letter.

“As it was late, I resolved to wait till the next day, and I was for an instant at Pal’s shop, whose house I had unfortunately quitted a month since. I say unfortunately, because, if I had not changed my lodging, I should not have been at the play, and I should never have had the fatal honour of an acquaintance with M. Clémendot. All the family at Pal’s were *at that time* so convinced that I had not gone out, on the 19th of March, that they would have sworn to it. Rosalie* called to my mind a discourse which I had held with her the next day. I said to her: *My God, we have been singing all the evening like silly people: perhaps during the very time they were killing this unfortunate man.* This peculiar circumstance had entirely escaped my memory: Rosalie brought it to my recollection: the Pals believed, and assuredly do even to this hour believe, that I was at home on the 19th; but they would be yet more determined against attesting it in a court of justice, from fear of compromising themselves, and lest the world might say, *that they took me by the hand.*

“Besides, they are not the only persons who are alarmed; there are plenty more of them. The affair of M. Fualdes has struck every body with horror: people in office are not without inquietude: and such as could bear witness in my favour avoid me, from a fear of committing themselves. And I, I am in the

* M. Pal’s youngest daughter.

prison of the Capucins, and am under no alarm : I am kept in close privacy, behind an iron grating, three doors separate me from every other human being, and I am under no alarm : I am accused of being an accomplice in the most horrible of murders, and I am under no alarm : no, once again, I am under no alarm.

“ Do not talk to me of weak people ; they are more dangerous than wicked ones. One is not upon one’s guard with them. What evils are in reserve for a state governed by a sovereign who is without energy ! A weak king is ordinarily the precursor of a tyrant : we have seen it in our own time : Louis 16th prepared the Revolution, by which Napoleon profited.

“ What a digression ! Perhaps not so great as it appears to you ; for if the affair of M. Fualdes has been a bloody tragedy, the preceding reign was one of a kind of which it would be difficult to enumerate all the acts. But I forgot that the pronouncing a certain name is a most especial crime in the eyes of my rigid jailer, and of his rigid partner, always under *the dread of committing themselves and of losing their places*. As for me, I entertain no fear of losing mine. If I was with my dear mamma, and my little Allah, it would be different.*

“ I no more recollect where I am. I was mention-

* “ I one day asked Madame Manson why she called her son Edward, *Allah* ? “ It is,” said she, “ the name he gave himself when he commenced lisping out his little words, and was unable to express himself better. I have adopted it, and sometimes call him by it. They say that this word signifies *God* amongst the Turks ; this dear little creature is my God.”

ing to you, I think, my visit to Pal's : I was well satisfied with them, and made no doubt that they would afford me their testimony whenever I required it : I left them under this impression. The following day I repaired to the Prefecture : I found M. Clémendot there : I expected it. My resolution was taken ; I said to M. Clémendot, ' Since it is necessary to restore the honour of *a brave officer*, I allow that I have acknowledged to you having been at Bancal's on the 19th of March ; but certainly I never told you that Bastide and Jausion were there.' M. Clémendot replied, that I was right ; and the Prefect anew assured me, that no mention was made of them.

" In thus saying, he passed into an apartment adjoining that in which we were, and from which he could hear us ; the door was besides left half open. Being alone with M. Clémendot, I told him that he must be satisfied, and that I made no doubt he would instantly depart. He was surprised, and must be so : my conduct had a right to astonish him ; and he doubtless said to himself, like Master James, ' How should I *have devised this without a thought ?*'

" He conjured me to tell him all. I recommended him to pack up his trunk, to join his General, and to leave me to myself. The Prefect, who distinctly perceived that our conversation was not that of two lovers, hastened to return, and to dismiss M. Clémendot. An instant after, my father was announced : he entered with a very severe air. ' So, truly,' said he, ' you dishonour your family in refusing that avowal which justice expects from you.' The Prefect announced to him that I confessed having told

M. Clémendot that I was at Bancal's. 'Yes,' said I then; 'but I imposed on M. Clémendot: I have not in my life been in the house of Bancal.'

"My father became furious at these words. 'Who will you persuade,' said he, 'that you have been able to make sport of this kind? Who will believe it?' I persisted, and it was then that he assured me he would go and throw himself at the feet of the King; that he would obtain an order to have me imprisoned for life; that I must bid an eternal adieu to my country and to my son. This did but gently agitate me: it could not enter into my head, that under the reign of a Bourbon such violence might be exercised. My father added, moreover, that I should bring my head to the scaffold. 'Well,' said I, 'I shall know how to bring it there: the idea of criminality will not accompany me to it, and I shall die without remorse.'

"It was then that my father, no longer able to contain himself, began to weep. 'Wretched daughter,' said he, 'and your family, for what do you account it? A father, who has never swerved from honour, who shewed you the path to it, you have reduced him to live in opprobrium, and you empoison his declining days. You have struck a dagger in the heart of your unfortunate mother! She is on the bed of sickness: there scarcely remains to her a breath of life. Your brothers are abandoned to the most frightful despair; and your son, your son, what an inheritance you have bequeathed him!'

"It would need another pen than mine to paint to you what passed in my bosom at this moment: as

soon as I saw my father's tears, I was no longer able to discern what passed; I felt despair almost equal to that which possessed me when I thought the little Edward dying in your arms. The Prefect, who was not an indifferent spectator of this horrible scene, persuaded my father to retire, telling him that he did not think violent means would succeed with me.

“When we were alone, he spoke to me with so much sweetness; his manners, united with the recollection of my father's anguish, made such an impression on me, that I concluded by actually acknowledging that I was at Bancal's house; but that I had not recognized any person there. My father returned: he had had time to calm himself: he demanded of me what I had been doing at Bancal's. I told him that I thought I had seen a man enter it, whose proceedings I narrowly watched; that some one had seized me in the corridor, and had conducted me I do not know where. I was in great difficulty; I had not any knowledge of the place, and yet it was necessary to make a deposition. My father, turning to the Prefect, said, ‘She was doubtless in the closet near the kitchen.’—‘Good,’ said I to myself, ‘there is a closet: this is useful to know.’ ‘She must be carried to the house,’ added my father. ‘This evening,’ answered the Prefect, ‘I shall be very happy to be there also.’ ‘Do not give yourself this trouble,’ said my father; ‘we will go with M. Julien, and Braquière, the registrar, who will carry the keys.’ The Prefect, however, insisted on accompanying us. It was agreed that M. Julien should come for me at

nine o'clock, to conduct me to the Prefecture, where my father was to be, and that we should all go from thence to Bancal's house.

"M. Julien was exact; he gave me his arm as far as the Prefect's, who was waiting for us in his closet. My father arrived shortly. They again put some questions to me, and asked me what I had done in the closet. I replied, 'that I found myself very unwell in it: that I had neither seen or heard any thing: that some one came to take me again without saying a word, and had conducted me into the street.' As I said this, Mr. Braquière entered with the keys. 'Go before us,' my father said to him; 'we follow you: open the gates.' He told me that it was impossible that they should not have spoken to me. 'Come, then,' said the Prefect, 'acknowledge what they said to you.' 'No,' I replied, 'nothing was said to me.' 'Ah well! they have written to you then.' I reflected a little, and then answered, 'They wrote to me on a little scrap of paper: *If you speak, you will perish.*' In wishing by some avowals which I feigned to make, to withdraw myself from persecution, I drew down incessantly fresh questions. It was after ten o'clock when we reached Bancal's house. M. Julien gave me his arm; the Prefect and my father entered first. I trembled. Picture to yourself, your daughter in a place where she believed they had murdered a man. When I saw the large table where it is said the unfortunate Fualdes was extended, the house, gloomy and deserted, like the cave of Trophonius, I was seized with such a fright, that I fell against the foot of a bed, by which

I gave myself a violent blow on the shoulder. They went in search of vinegar; revived me, and again questioned me. I was so eager to get out, that I answered yes to every thing they asked me.

“As they wished to assure themselves if from the closet every thing could be seen and heard, M. Julien shut himself in it. I was delighted to be freed from making this experiment myself. At length, however, I entered this celebrated closet with all those who had accompanied me; I told them that I believed it was the same; that it had such a window, and that they had not made me ascend any steps. At last we departed from this dreadful haunt, where I was in constant trepidation, lest they might confine me (you know that I half believe in ghosts). The Prefect, who perceived my terror, told me, that they would reconduct me thither, and often, if I did not state every thing. He gave me his arm. We continued at his house till midnight. I told them, however, nothing more, if it was not, that the individual who had conducted me into the street, had followed me as far as the Square of Cité, by the side of the Wells.

“We went away from the Prefecture: and in traversing the court, I said to M. Julien, ‘I will return here no more: the Prefect makes me say too much about it.’ I added, in a low voice, ‘*Even what I do not know.*’ The next day I received another invitation from the Prefect, who having heard what I had said in going out, desired to speak with me again. As I was dressing myself Victoire entered: she made me promise to step over to her house, and impart to

her the result of my conference: I engaged to do it provided it was not night.

“Arrived at the Prefect's, I completed the deposition, which you have read in the information, and signed it. I passed *eight hours following* in speaking of the same thing; and you know, my dear mother, how amusing that is to me. At last the Prefect informed me, that M. Clémendot had told him, that I was disguised as a man on the evening of the 19th March. I replied that it was false. The Prefect told me, that this circumstance could not have been invented. As I saw no inconvenience in admitting it, I said, ‘Very well, *Yes*, I was dressed as a man.’ But my dress having never had existence, and fearing they might demand to see it, I hastened to add, ‘My pantaloons are burnt, I have nothing left but the spencer, so do not seek for it.’

“The Prefect regarded me stedfastly, so as to make me change countenance, and said that I had destroyed these pantaloons because there was some blood on them. I answered again, ‘Very well, *Yes*, there was some blood.’ I perceived, in these words, that I might be considered as an accomplice; but I was then so worn out with depositions, so fatigued, so overloaded with importunities, that I said all that first occurred to me, with the idea of the sooner escaping the Prefect, and in order at last to go and take some food; it was time for it; at five in the evening I was still fasting.

“Victoire came at the approach of night, very impatient to know what I had done at the Prefecture. I repeated to her word for word all my deposition;

and made her take notice, that if she spoke of it she would be subpoenaed. I wished to make proof of this woman's discretion. What I told her was absolutely no secret. I do not so easily make intimates; but every thing conspiring to shew her that it was her interest to be silent, (for she had told me, that she would on no account in the world be summoned as a witness in this affair;) yet I was unable to make her silent. Next day I met her again in the morning: I asked her if she had been faithful to her promise: 'Oh, yes,' she said. 'I'll wager, however, that you have told your husband something—that is true; but he will say nothing about it.—Well and good, have a care.—You would cut a figure before the Court.'*

"Victoire had tears in her eyes on hearing me speak thus, and left me. I had passed a very indifferent

* Madam Manson does not here perhaps insist enough upon a very remarkable circumstance: it is easy to perceive that she has not employed or consulted an advocate to draw up this memoir. The weightiest of the charges which offer themselves in support of the presumed truth of her deposition to the Prefect of l'Aveyron, is the recital that she made to Victoire. We form an idea that she may have yielded to long and numerous interrogatories, to the earnest instances of a magistrate who awed her, to impatience at witnessing the truth incessantly repelled, to false shame at making a recantation, and finally to the threats of paternal authority so strangely infatuated. But Victoire? What influence had she? What necessity? What interest was there in making a similar tale to a chambermaid? But she has not told this tale; she has not said to Victoire, "I was at Bancal's house; I saw every thing; they saved my life, &c." She said to her, "*I have told the Prefect that I was at Bancal's house.*" What an amazing difference is there in repeating that one has affirmed a thing, or in fully confirming that thing!

night; I began to foresee the consequences of my confessions at the Prefecture: I wrote in the evening the billet, (No. III.) and I obtained a fresh audience from the Prefect.*

“ But how could I dare to tell him that I had asserted a falsehood? How expose to him my motives? A cool head like that of M. d’Estourmel’s would never believe the effects of an exalted imagination: he had however borne a part in the scene with my father: but he may not think that it might have power to produce a false deposition.

“ I must confess to my dear mother, that I had *in principio* a powerful motive, which determined me to sustain the character of a witness in this affair. My father was strongly suspected of taking an interest about the accused, particularly about Jausion; I knew it; and when I saw his despair, I made no doubt that he was informed of the discourse which was held on his account, and that he might also accuse me of refraining from speaking out: I perceived his situation, I was in torture.

“ In the mean while, the idea of taking a false oath pursued me, and was uppermost. I then wrote the

* “ Listen to me, Prefect! in the name of heaven, listen to me! and have compassion on the distracted state of my mind. In you alone I place implicit confidence. If there is yet time for it, endeavour to prevent my depositions from being drawn; I am almost beside myself: I have as yet taken no food to-day. It appears impossible to me to connect two ideas. To-morrow, if you will grant me but till to-morrow, I will open my entire mind to you. Oh! have pity on me; I am only imprudent. But time presses.

“ I have the honor, &c.

“ E. MANSON.”

letter, (No. IV.) to the Prefect,* and carried it to him myself. I forgot to tell you, that in going out of his house the day before, I was accosted by M. Arseau;

* “ I am unworthy of your kindness, Sir : abandon an unfortunate ; load me with all the weight of your anger. Finish with alienating my mind : it is not far removed from it. I would go and throw myself at the feet of the first President, to confess every thing to him ; but no, it is to you that I will declare it ; but be moderate ; in the name of heaven, be moderate. Forget the three troublesome days that I have just made you pass : call to mind the difficulty you have had in drawing from me what you call the *truth*. Call to mind all the circumstances which have preceded my pretended confessions, all the menaces which have been made me. Do you at last discover that my deposition bears a character of probability ? But it must absolutely have one. If you order me, if my father believes his honor really committed in this affair, I will maintain this deposition, at every species of danger to my own life ; if it is in danger, which is possible, believe me, it is not that which terrifies me ; I have weighed every thing, considered every thing. It is alarming, without doubt to be perjured. Can the motive serve me for an excuse, and the fear of dishonouring my father, of being separated from my son ? Advise me, Sir ; do not reduce me to despair. I will do every thing ; yes, every thing for you whose kindness penetrates me with the most lively gratitude, and with the desire of rendering myself worthy of it ; and for a father who has never done me justice. I repeat it, I will perform the will of both.

“ It is certain that my deposition implicates no one ; that the public is persuaded that I was at Bancal’s house ; that a witness arrived yesterday evening, paid, without doubt, in order to say that he had an appointment with me. This is incredible ; for it will be fairly proved that it was another ; we were not both there. I am going to be accused in full court, before an immense crowd ; and then the honor of my father will be much farther committed, and mine is lost for ever : my head is no longer equal to the subject, I wander from it ; I shall not have power to speak ; I am before you, Sir ; dispose of my life, it is in your hands : I have not dared to

defendant on the part of Madame Jausion, who said to me, ‘how do you allow yourself to be interrogated at the Prefecture? The Prefect is not appointed for that purpose; you ought to protest against such an injustice.’ I paid little attention to what M. Arseau had said to me: I quitted him without making him any answer; without even, I believe, having saluted him. I was hungry.

“I have informed you, my dear mamma, that I carried the letter myself to the Prefect; he read it in my presence: he was expecting important disclosures; and he assumed so severe an air when I wished to say that I had not been at Bancal’s, that I concluded (terrible and incredible weakness!) by afresh acknowledging that I had been there.

“I withdrew in a state of despair: it was very late. Your cousin Planard came to my house for an instant: she commenced a very serious lecture; I told her that it was of great length, to judge of it by the exordium; but she had chosen her time for preaching opportunely! The fever was circulating in every vein, and did not permit me to remain quiet. I paced my apartment with lengthened steps, and at last, losing all self-possession, I abruptly quitted Marion, and rushed into the street. It was almost night: I went and knocked at the Abbé Brast’s, my confessor: his maid told me that he was abroad, and would not return till nine o’clock. On my return I

entrust this to any body. I have yesterday and this morning become acquainted with all the circumstances laid to my charge: it matters not; I will state them to you. Your pardon, Sir; a thousand times, your pardon.

“E. MANSON.”

met Madame Pal, and her two daughters, who proposed to me to go into their house; I followed them; my head was entirely gone; I exposed my situation to them; they pitied it; I saw them all weep, except the father. They told me they regretted having known me.

“ I left them to repair to M. Brast’s; I told him that I came too tardily to seek his advice; I recounted to him my history: he told me, that whatever might result from my deposition, I ought not to support it, if it was false: that nothing could authorise perjury, and that I was under a mistake, in believing that my testimony implicated only myself; that my deposition was very strong against the woman Bancal, since I had clearly proved that the crime had been committed at her house. I admitted that he was right; I promised him to be more prudent in future; he engaged me to resume confidence, to address myself to God, who can do every thing; to remain faithful to him; and above all, to swerve no more from the truth, whatever threats might be made me.

“ I left M. Brast. This excellent man knew how to calm my mind: his conversation restored me to peace. The next day was Sunday. A woman who had the appearance of a servant, brought me a note,* without saying from whom. I answered, that I could

[* No. V.—“ Before departing this morning, I request you will do me the pleasure of coming over to the house where Galtier’s children lodge: it is the third house on the right hand, in going from the Cathedral to the Lyceum: it is near the house of M. Jouery. I should be very glad to see you before my departure.

“ I salute you, &c.”

not accept the invitation which it conveyed to me, but that I declared ignorance of any of the assassins of M. Fualdes.

“ I went abroad to go to the mass; and on my return, I found my sweet little Edward, who had just arrived. I found myself very courageous with him: I could have braved an army. My father, advised by the Prefect of my vacillations, sent in search of me; I took my son with me. I went through a most distressing scene; and in order to obtain my dismissal, I again engaged to support my deposition before the Court at Montpellier; hoping, that before the time of the trial, I should find means to appease him. My father threatened me with again removing my infant; I had him in my arms; and I said, ‘ let the stoutest attempt to tear him from me. The little creature clung to my neck, and after a little time fell asleep. When my father gave me leave to go, I very soon profited by it: I awoke Edward; and we remained together at home, where I soon found a person enter, who was sent on the part of Madame Pons, who desired to see me. I answered, that I could not receive her during the day, because it would be too much remarked; but that she might come at nine o’clock, during the play.

“ In the afternoon I saw the Prefect; I told him that I was fully determined on supporting my deposition: but I offered from time to time certain reasonings, which continued proving to him that my resolution was not very firm; for he said to me, ‘ you have seen somebody; they have circumvented you?’ I acknowledged to him that I had in the morning re-

ceived a note, the hand-writing of which I was unacquainted with; (and that is true) although it has since been said, that this note was from Madame Pons, and it is possible. Otherwise, I very positively believed it from M. Arseau: on which account, without further examination, I handed it over to the Prefect. I confessed to him also that Madam Pons was coming in the evening. ‘You do wrong,’ said he, ‘to receive her.’ I then replied, that if this lady committed herself in coming to see me, I would not receive her; but that, as the danger only regarded myself, I should certainly not shut my doors to her: that in short I examined but little if Madam Pons was the sister, or the sister in law of the accused; that I only saw in her my benefactress.

“This avowal was doubtless the greatest of my follies: if I had not spoken of this visit to the Prefect, he might not have stationed gendarmes under my window, and all the world might have remained ignorant of my having conversed with Madame Pons; they might have drawn no conjectures from our interview, and might not have invented her having brought me 6000 francs, as the price of my silence. I left the Prefect as the sun was setting: I recollect the time, because I stopped an instant to reflect, before descending the steps of the grand entry, which led into the court. I was contented with the idea of embracing my son on reaching home, and of having him near me during the night. I put him to bed; and about nine o’clock there was a rap at the door. It was Madame Pons: she was a little disguised to come to my house. As I found her changed and

fallen away, I should not have recognised her: she entered with a female domestic, who sat herself down at a great distance from us, and fell asleep. Madam Pons first asked me if I was at Bancal's house? I told her no. 'But you have admitted it.'—'That's true'—'But you are foolish.'—'Certainly, I am foolish.'—'But what then is become of your character? I no more recognise you, I have seen you so composed under misfortune; and you will support a false deposition before the court.' 'Oh! no,' said I, 'do not imagine that my folly will carry me that length.' 'Have a care, Madam; indeed you dishonour yourself; nothing in the world ought to induce you to take a false oath.'

"After about a quarter of an hour's conversation, Madam Pons wished to leave me, fearing a surprise; for I had frightened her, on her coming in. I told her that she perhaps would be the cause that I should sleep the next day in prison. This menace made her desire to withdraw herself as quick as possible; but I began laughing, and begged her to wait till they had left the play, and there was nobody in the street.

"We conversed on the death of Madam Colrat, and on many other topics which have escaped my memory. I only recollect asking her if it was true, as I had been told the day before, that Jausion on learning my summons before the court, had demanded a poniard: She assured me that it was an absurd story, and that her brother in law was perfectly composed.

"Madam Pons left me soon after mid-night. I rose next day about seven o'clock and wrote the paper

No. VI. * in which the Prefect has not, he says, recognised my style. They have subsequently asserted,

* No. VI.

“It is in the sanctuary of justice—it is in the presence of its respectable ministers, of the God who hears, and who will judge me, that I will declare the truth.

“I declare that my first deposition is the only one, which the law can take. All the confessions which I have made, have been snatched from me by violence and by the fear of occasioning murders.—In reality, with what have I not been threatened? On one side I see my brothers engaged in a duel with M. Clémendot, in which some one must necessarily perish; I tremble! On the other, I am told of an order from the King which exiles me from my country; which for ever deprives me of my child, the sole blessing which remains to me. I am refused all means of existence. A father with tears tells me that his honour is attached to my deposition. And finally, I am conducted in the middle of the night into a place of horror; they draw consequences from the effect which the sight produces on me, and they have the barbarity to tell me that I shall be put in a place of solitary confinement, if I do not speak. I am assured that there are witnesses who testify against me; that the fact is proved. The public, whose malignity incessantly seeks for food, invents the most atrocious facts. I am alone without defence, without advice, without support. What head could resist so many evils accumulated on it: I have lost mine. A fever, want of sleep and of nourishment, and despair, alienated my mind: I said things which I do not even recollect. I lost for an instant all energy; but I shall regain it, and I will make use of it.—What? before an august tribunal, before an immense assembly of people, shall I take a false oath! and that for the purpose of affirming that I was, at the hour of night, in a place of prostitution, at the moment in which an horrible crime was committed in it! And the honour of a family is not compromised by such a deposition. I repeat it at all risks to me and mine: I formally deny being at Bancal’s house, not only on the 19th of March, the day of the murder of M. Fauldes, but even anterior to this outrage. I was ignorant of the existence, and the situation of this house. I desire as much as any one that the guilty should be

that it was M. Romiguière, who however did not arrive till some days after it had been transmitted to the minister for public affairs.—It is so truly my own, that I had not yet finished it, when a bailiff came to warn me to repair to the court of judicature forthwith ; and without giving myself time to read it, I put it in my ridicule, and rose to depart.

“ At the moment they came to announce to me that my father wanted me : I was with him instantly, and told him not to detain me, that I was in a hurry, and that M. Constant was waiting for me. He seemed to distrust my air, and asked me what I should declare in court, ‘ The truth, and nothing but the truth.’ And I gave him the sort of declaration which I had just drawn up, in which there is a phrase which is not yet finished ; but they gave me no time to do it.

“ I was far from imagining that my letters would pass to posterity, and that my name would make a noise in the world !

“ I leave you to conjecture the face my father put on, on reading this paper : he became furious, forbade

punished ; if I knew them, if it was in my power to throw light on the steps of justice, no consideration should be able to arrest me.—But being at six in the evening of the 19th of March at the house of M. Pal, in the rue Neuve, from whence I did not go out till nine on the morning of the 20th ; let M. Clémendot fight with my brothers, let all my family perish, I will never certify a falsehood which dishonours it for ever. I am decided to submit to all events. The truth will discover itself, I hope. In expectation of it, I declare that I persist in my first deposition ; that I will support it during the trial, and for the remainder of my life ; and I sign it.

“ E. MANSON.”

my going to the court, and told me that he was going to speak to the judge, who arranged the proceedings for the trial. I profited by his absence, to take my departure. The sight of my child made me forget the terrible moments which they had made me pass.

After dinner, the Prefect requested me again to come to his house, this was the 4th of August: I repaired thither, and was shewn into his office—He was alone; I presented him my declaration, which my father had returned me. After reading it, the Prefect quitted me, saying that he would return, that I must take the trouble of awaiting him, and of making some serious reflections.

I walked about for a considerable time in the apartment in which he had left me, before his return: I had even leisure enough to take a lesson in geography, and study the map of the department of the Aveyron.—I heard steps in the great hall, and losing patience, went out in order to go away, when M. Dognat * came to me and very politely begged me to wait another instant. I returned into the closet, where the Prefect did not delay repairing, accompanied by the king's solicitor, M. Julien, and my father, who commenced saying very severe things to me, when the Prefect begged him to withdraw, 'because,' said he to him, 'you are not cool.'

"He went out—M. Maynier † reproached me exceedingly; there was no kind of misfortune which he

* Lieutenant of the gend'armes.

† Solicitor to the king.

did not place before me ; but I remained unmoveable. I constantly bore in remembrance the advice of Abbé Brast, and always supported the truth. Nevertheless I feared that my father would deprive me of my little one, which caused me to write several times to the Prefect to engage him to protect it.* I perceived also that I had offended a magistrate by my falsehoods : I wished to excuse myself, I knew not what part to take with him.—

* No. VII.

“ Once again, Prefect, you deign to hear me with kindness ; do not load me with that contempt which paralyses me in your presence. Who is more sensible than myself of the value of your favour—to whom have you furnished greater proofs of it ? Can you credit, that at the expense of all the interest which you have testified for me, I should have amused myself in romancing with you ; and that my sole motive has been to make sport of you, in making you lose your valuable time ? You cannot think it ; No, Prefect, you cannot think it. But how happens it that I should not have the power of soliciting your advice, as many times as I tell you that I am a witness in the affair of M. Fauldes ? Is it ever too late to speak the truth ? Can you believe it ? Oh ! For pity’s sake, in the name of that sensibility which characterises you, do not abandon me, be still my protector ; my lot depends on you ; and if I have offended you, accuse my imprudence alone, save my family, Prefect ; it is for that that I implore you : have pity on my unfortunate father, on my son !

Could you advise me to stand to a false deposition ? In vain should I promise it to you. I am on the brink of a precipice : will you not aid me to escape from it ? Have you not told me that you had absolute authority, and that if I had committed a crime, you could obtain my pardon ? Prove to me, Prefect, that the interest which you have been so willing to testify about me, was a little unconnected with the important affair ; that my family has some claim on your kindness. I always make common cause with it ; my interests

“ One day, my father sent in search of me; I went to him, and found there Gustavus. I underwent a most distressing scene from both: there are no sort of invectives which I had not to submit to: finally, Amans entered in order to complete the trio, and certainly he bore a good part; there was a perfect union and agreement amongst them; they did not once change their tone. This lasted four hours. My son, who had followed me, and whom the conversation did not amuse any more than myself, grew impatient, and pulled me by the gown to make me come away. I said, and I repeated it to my father, that the most certain death should not make me assert a falsehood before the court; that in vain should I promise them to do so; that they need not reckon upon it. ‘ For the rest of you,’ added I, weeping, ‘ you ought to leave me at peace; you *put me to martyrdom*.

are its own. Ah! If I alone had to complain, I should know how to choose my part.

“ Pardon me, Prefect, if I repeat that my design has never been to offend any body, and especially him who has acquired many claims on my gratitude—Will you accept the assurance of this sentiment, and that of my respect.

“ I have the honour to be, &c.

“ E. MANSON.”

No. VIII.

“ Yes, Sir, I am decided; one instant more, and I had said every thing.—But my safety.—But to-morrow I will tell it you. You answer me in every thing, especially in the secret. You shall see whether my deposition is true or false. I have never been at Bancal’s house, and yet I am suspected of having been there. O my God! have pity on me.

“ I am, &c.

“ E. MANSON.”

I will tell you if you wish it, that I alone murdered M. Fualdes: but in court I will speak the truth, nothing but the truth.'

" Amans, when he gave his deposition in court, entirely changed the sense of these words. He pretends that I told him: *I will say if you wish it, that it was Jausion who conducted me close to the wells of the square of Cité.* I have not mentioned his name, only on that day; but your nephew, fearing, perhaps, to commit me, has entirely changed this phrase, and important consequences have resulted from it. The counsel on the civil side knew how to turn this deposition of Amans Rodat to good account: it has not a little contributed to produce Jausion's condemnation. I effected my escape from my father's, to the great satisfaction of my Edward, who said to me, 'These people will always torment you; tell them that you were at Bancal's; this will content them, and they will leave you alone'

" Some days afterwards I saw Pal's daughters, who cast many reproaches upon me; they assured me that they had disputed with every body, to prove that it was *impossible* that I could have gone out in the evening without being perceived, and that by my acknowledgements I made them appear silly, or what is much worse, capable of *taking me by the hand.* I urged them not to *commit* themselves, and told them that our own interest touching us more narrowly than that of others, we ought not to lose sight of it. *Palson** came to my house: he passed three hours

* The youngest Pal. His family use this diminutive name with him.

there, and for the purpose of making me acknowledge that I had seen M. Fualdes assassinated. He told me that there were terrible depositions against me; that Madam Colrats' steward pretended to have given me a meeting at Bancal's house. I know perfectly well that M. Librejol loves to joke; but in such a matter as that, I could not believe him capable of it.

"Palson told me that three witnesses had seen me pass through the square of Cité, at eight in the evening of the 19th of March. 'In short,' added he, 'I know something which would compel you to speak if you knew it.'—'Tell it me then.' 'It was entrusted to me under a promise of secrecy; perhaps if you told me yours, I should decide on entrusting you with mine.' I saw that it was an artifice on his part. I assured him, that as for myself I knew nothing, and that he could not have been told that I was gone to Bancal's house. When he had left me, I reflected on all that had befallen me, on all that had been said of me, on that so perfect conviction of the public, who made no more doubt then, than at this day, that I was present at the murder of M. Fualdes. I concluded that a woman was actually there, and that she had been taken for me.

"This idea was continually increasing, and it is at this moment changed into certainty, or one must otherwise credit the existence of numerous false witnesses.

"Dating from the day on which I received my second summons, I went no more abroad than to go to the Prefecture or to the eight o'clock mass on Sundays. I was become an object of horror and of

contempt: I was, said they, an infamous prostitute; and still more, I supported assassins.

“ My situation was horrible, and without my son, who alone found the means of soothing me by his caresses and his little infantile reasonings, chagrin would soon have devoured me.

“ I wrote to the Prefect the letter No. IX* ; he

* Sir,—By what fatal imprudence have I voluntarily thrown myself into a labyrinth, from which, without an express miracle of Providence, it is impossible to extricate myself? The heaviest of my misfortunes is doubtless that of having incurred disgrace in your opinion; nay, still more, contempt. What an error! Why have I betrayed truth? What consideration has had power to persuade me for an instant to wander from the track which had been traced for me, and for magistrates who did not even believe that I sacrificed myself for them, and who overwhelmed me with their injurious suspicions? My mind is shipwrecked; black despair has taken possession of me; I no longer know myself.

“ It seems to me you have been heard say that you made discoveries which grieved you for the sake of humanity, of which you would willingly have entertained a better opinion. Ah! Sir, what have I learnt in eight days? What experience is that which misfortune produces? I have passed my life far from a world which I did not seek to know; and without my foolish curiosity for plays, I should still live almost in ignorance of it. But what then does this world wish from me, that it is so exasperated against me? In what have I offended it? How have I merited its hate?

“ Surely I never excited envy: I am without fortune: nature has neither granted me beauty or talents; and if some persons prepossessed in my favour have said that I have wit, I have proved clearly enough that I have not even common sense. I have enemies I know not why; but this truth is too evident to call it in question: they have framed a web, of which I have conducted all the threads; it is I, I who forge darts directed against myself.

“ I perceive myself obliged to struggle against my disconsolate

was absent. It was shortly after this period that some persons unknown were in the habit of transmitting

family, against a city, a department, against all France, which calls out for vengeance and which will obtain it. Heaven is just! this crime is unparalleled.

“ Alas! what! and should I then be the only one who would support the assassins? Could I embrace their defence? I, who was so shocked with their atrocity, that I unceasingly repeated that the penalty inflicted by the law was disproportioned to the crime, and that the law of retaliation should have been preserved?—Ah! if in this affair I am not entirely justified, I demand death; is it not preferable to an existence covered with infamy?

“ Pardon me, Prefect, if I abuse your patience; the purpose which I at first proposed to myself has been that of appearing less culpable in your eyes, by the avowal of my error; if I have not forfeited my right to being believed, after having failed in candour with you, who have done every thing to merit it from me. My other end will doubtless be more easy to fulfil; it relates to a favour which I yet am hardy enough to solicit, and which I hope to obtain. It is not life, it is not liberty; I repeat it to you, Prefect, these blessings have little value for me; but my son Edward, am I condemned to live separate from him? I no more make account of my country; it does not do me justice. I will become a cosmopolite, and my country shall be the place where I can find peace and impartiality.

“ I throw myself at your feet, I implore your support; perhaps you may one day be a father; you will never have but a very imperfect idea of my torments. I have offended you; but have I not already acknowledged it? and revenge is a sentiment which cannot find place amidst so much kindness, greatness of mind, and sensibility.—Prove to me that these virtues still exist in the nineteenth century. I have not doubted it in relation to you, and assuredly I shall never doubt it.—It is to you alone that I will address myself, to you whose anger I have provoked; you will have pity on me, you will prevent their taking away my child.

“ If I had committed a voluntary crime I could still obtain pardon: and shall then an imprudence, nothing more than an imprudence, a momentary assertion, an erroneous reasoning, be so severely

me certain notes, which contained only requests to repair to houses which were pointed out in them, and which I was unacquainted with. I returned these requests, saying that I could not go abroad. Many persons had apprised me that Amans had made a deposition, and that I had confided to him being at Bancal's house the 19th of March; that I had also told Edward and Rose Pierret so. At all this I rubbed my eyes, in order to assure myself if I was

punished? Yes, Prefect, the gratitude which binds me has caused my last misfortune: it causes the fury of the public; it renders my justification so difficult, that I can only expect it from heaven. I think I told you, Sir, that I had been brought up in the country; you must have easily perceived that my education has been very greatly neglected; a perfect stranger to what is called etiquette; how must I have shocked you by my conduct, by the choice of my expressions. I never was in the presence of authority; never has man commanded my respect, excepting my father, who does not reproach me, I hope, with having failed in it towards him. Pardon pardon, Prefect, in favour of the intention. Do not repeat to me that *my sole aim has been to make sport of you*. Of what monstrosity do you suppose me capable? Was there ever seen such a compound of artifice and duplicity?

"I conclude this long letter: I send it in the hope that you will burn it, that at least it will only be read by you. There are some things—Ah! if I was not a mother! Never!—no, never!—Prefect, you are far from knowing my character. Allow me to supplicate you not to shew my letter: it is insignificant trash, a knot of extravagances. Give it what name you please.—What can a head almost distracted produce? Believe, nevertheless, that I shall always preserve reason enough not to lose the recollection of so many bounties. Will you accept this assurance, as well as that of the sentiments of respect, &c.

"E. MANSON."

really awake ; and I asked if all Rodez had lost their senses, or if it was myself.

“ The 14th of August the court of Montpellier arrived. The Day of our Lady, there was, agreeable to custom, a grand procession.—I placed myself at the window to see it pass. I had mounted up to the second story, in order not to be perceived ; notwithstanding I could not escape the looks of the Prefect: he raised his head and I met his eye, in which I thought I read reproaches. The next day my father sent M. Lautard * to tell me that this latter was to conduct me to the Solicitor-general, and to desire me to be in readiness at eight o'clock. I answered that I would be there. An instant after I received an invitation from the Prefect for the same hour ; it was then that I wrote the letter No. X.† in which I men-

* Acknowledged as his son.

† Why has this letter, No. X., been suppressed in the proceedings?—It has not appeared in a single information.

No. X.

“ Sir,—I am grieved to be unable to accept your invitation ; I could have *wished it exceedingly*. I have been several times to-day tempted to write to you, to demand five minutes' audience. I was restrained by the recollection of the air of irritation you showed yesterday. I am obliged to be this evening at eight o'clock, by my father's order, at the house of a gentleman, whose name has escaped me, I believe that he lodges at M. Mainier's.

“ To-morrow, Prefect, at one o'clock, if that hour suits you, I shall have the honour of seeing you, doubtless for the last time.—To-morrow is the precursor of the terrible day. My letter, you say, has touched you—Great God ! there still exist then feeling minds—I am not then abandoned by all nature !—Ah ! though there

tioned to him my visit to the Solicitor-general, and was ignorant that it was to be a secret.

“ M. Juin de Siran is a chevalier of St. Louis; he received me with all the politeness possible, telling me that M. de Lairolle had spoken much to him of me; he added that my *charming voice* was famed at Montpellier, and finished by speaking to me of this terrible affair, which gave me no great desire to sing. He put many questions to me, and used a vast many arguments with me to prove that I was at Bancal's, and that I ought to acknowledge it. I assured him that nothing on earth should make me declare a falsehood. He took his leave of me, begging me not to speak of our interview; but he was too tardy in this step, I had written it to the Prefect, without reckoning on my being followed in the street by Constans, the ex-commissary of police.

“ Next day my father desired me to come over to his house; I went there with my little idol. I found Victoire all in tears. My father asked me if I was still decided on denying every thing; I answered him I was. He spoke to me of my confidential communication to Victoire. I assured him that it was solely

should be but a single being in the world, who might interest himself in my fate, I could still love life. How have I been deceived!—all the world—yes, all the world deceives me, and wishes candour from me. Pardon me, Prefect—pardon me—I am wandering; my heart is ulcerated. I have passed a horrible morning—I will tell you—yes, I will tell you—you will pity me, I am sure of it. The more I reflect on my affairs, the less I understand them—I have not studied Machiavel.

“ Receive, &c.

“ E. MANSON.”

at the earnest entreaty of this woman, several times repeated, that I had told her what I had *deposed* at the prefecture, which was not the smallest secret.— ‘But,’ said my father, ‘will you not stand to this deposition?’ I answered in a tone so firm, that I would not, and that they should sooner snatch away my own and my child’s life, that he became furious, and drew near to strike me. Victoire came to my succour, but it was little Edward who must see and hear it; he set up loud cries and wished to fight with his grandfather, if I had not hindered him from it.— He told me afterwards that he would not return again to see papa, who treated mamma Clarissa so ill.

“My father was in such a passion that, to appease him, I again submitted, and promised him every thing he wished. He told me he was going to the Solicitor-general’s, to impart to him my intentions, and that I must be careful what I was about. I told him to make himself easy, and very soon went away, leaving Victoire more dead than alive.

“In the evening I was desirous to see the President; and, without imparting my design to any person, I repaired to the house of M. de Cabrière, where he lodged. It was five o’clock. A servant maid told me that the President was gone abroad to dinner, and that besides he would see nobody. I protested that I was no relation to the accused.—‘Ah!’ said this girl, ‘perhaps you are Madame Manson?’ ‘Right.’ ‘In that case the President will receive you; I am sure of it.’ ‘How do you know?—I told not a soul that I was coming here; and myself knew nothing of it an hour ago.’ ‘It is all the same,’ answered the

maid, ‘you will do the President a pleasure; I have heard him say something respecting it.’ I requested her to come and fetch me at eight o’clock; she accordingly came, and introduced me into a handsome apartment, where I found a woman in M. Grénier’s service. She talked with me of the cold which prevailed at Rodez.*

“After a short interval the President was announced.—I rose, and was much disconcerted at seeing the Prefect also; he had a very animated air, and appeared to believe that I was about making a confidant of the President. He told me that in every view this magistrate was well worthy of my confidence, and that he was going to leave us to ourselves. I answered him with much vivacity, that I had no secret to impart to the President which might not be heard by M. d’Estourmel. I conjured him to remain; but he quitted us, assuring me that all that he had said to me was for my own interest, and that he could not conceive how I should extricate myself from the gulf into which I had precipitated myself by my denial.

“I remained alone with M. Grénier.—He at first treated me very severely; and, feigning to believe that I refused appearing in court, he threatened me with being conducted thither by the gendarmerie.—I told the President that, although I had nothing to declare before the court, I should present myself there, and that I knew obedience to the law. He

* It was then the month of August.

spoke to me of my father, whom I had reduced to despair. I was not astonished at his severity when I was aware that he had seen my father; I nevertheless placed my situation before him as well as I possibly could. As I spoke I perceived that the President was softened, and regarded me with a less angry air.

“ They came to announce M. de Plantade and M. de Lunaret.—I rose to depart, when M. Grénier asked me if I should have any objection to seeing these gentlemen; I replied none at all, and resumed my seat. The President imparted to the two judges all that I had told him; he mentioned to them the persecutions which I had undergone: ‘in short,’ said he, ‘Madame is in such a state of exasperation, that she wants to force M. Clémendot, the pistol at his head, to speak the truth; and, if he resists, wishes to blow his brains out.’ I had said this to the President; I acknowledged the fact in presence of the two other gentlemen. I spoke to them with so much force and energy, that their confidence was staggered. I had such an appearance of truth, when I protested to them that I never was at Bancal’s house, that they concluded by believing me. I told them that I was delirious when I made my deposition at the prefecture; but that the sight of the scaffold should not make me deceive justice.

“ The President told me to calm myself; that, after all that I had just set before them, I ought not to be even heard; but that that would not depend upon him; that he did not know what the Minister for Public Affairs and the Civil Party would do. He

seemed to feel for me; and, after having passed two hours with him, I withdrew. It is thus that my first interview with the President passed.

“ Next day (the 18th) I was in court; but I remained in the witnesses’ room. On that day they were employed in empannelling a jury, and in reading the indictment; this day was a very uneasy one for me; I was assailed by a crowd of people who said to me, ‘ Reveal the truth then—what are you afraid of?—Can you take part with these villains—they are the horror of all France—you alone would save them.’ ”

“ I was beside myself on hearing these words. The common people regarded me with contempt, the better class turned away their heads, in order to avoid seeing me, or rather looked at me with an air of pity. Such is the condition in which your unfortunate daughter found herself in the witnesses’ room, the first time that she appeared there. Madame Castel came and spoke to me, saying :—‘ Take care, cousin, how you assert your not being at Bancal’s, the 19th of March : you are going to prove yourself a liar ; there is a witness present, who deposes that on the 20th of the same month, Madeline Bancal brought a bonnet to her to make up, which a lady had given her, and she finds that the stuff is of the same pattern with one of your gowns.—‘ That is possible,’ said I, ‘ when I buy a gown, I do not take the entire piece ; others may have the same taste as myself.’ ”

“ Madame Castel, for more than two hours, made use of the most wearisome arguments to me, to prove that I ought to acknowledge having been in a house

of prostitution, pretending that I should not be a less honest woman on that account. ‘All the world,’ said she, ‘*will commend you.*’ I either heard her, or I did not hear her.

“At last, they permitted us, at five o’clock, to retire. It was time: we had gone there at ten o’clock. I suffered the crowd to disperse. Madame Castel proposed to accompany me, which I accepted; but she retained me a moment to see the accused pass by. I did not know Bastide. I could not well examine his features; he walked very fast. It was not the same with Jausion: he crept along and sought my eye; he fixed my regard with so significant an air, that I made no doubt that this look demanded something; but I had not the talent of divining it.

“Next day the witnesses were called. I had never in my life entered the hall of justice; at the moment when I appeared I was so troubled, that I saw nothing but two gentlemen who commenced smiling as soon as they first perceived me; by their easy and contented air, I took them for jurymen; but what could I imagine, my dear mother, when passing near them to follow the steps of the other witnesses who took a direction to the bottom of the hall, I saw that they saluted me, and I recognized *Bastide and Jausion.*

“Of all the emotions I have experienced, this was, perhaps, the most violent; I precipitated myself into the crowd. I perceived that the politeness of the accused could not fail being remarked; all eyes were fixed upon me. I saw that they destroyed themselves, and destroyed me also. I held my sum-

mons in my hands. I have since been told that I gnawed it, and I believe it. I was actually enraged; I was choked; the blood flew into my head; if I had not gone out, it would have suffocated me.

“ Madame Castel and others did not fail to tell me that the accused had taken off their hats to me, and that every body knew it.—Eh! My heavens, I knew it also! We returned into the witnesses’ room, waiting our turn to be examined; but though my number was a very distant one, I expected to be called every instant; it kept every body there; I was, they said, an interesting witness! and I knew nothing. M. Clémendot passed near me; he had an air so insolent, that I again formed the very serious project of blowing his brains out before the court, the jury, and the public. The sight of him had produced such an effect on me, that the blood gushed out of both my nostrils. I forgot to tell you, that I had in the interim, learnt that Edward was desirous to fight him; but very luckily, the generals had been informed of it, and that they had taken measures to prevent the duel which I feared. I wrote a long letter to the Provost, to impart my fears to him; he had the goodness to repair to my house, where we chatted on this subject for a considerable time; he removed my fears, at least pending the trial; my brother having given his word of honor, not to appear at Rodez as long as the proceedings lasted.

“ But I had calculated, that as Edward had not fought for a considerable time, he must grow impatient, and that the pretext being more than sufficient, he would take advantage of it. I had considered, that

if he came off conqueror, it would be a criminal affair, which would oblige him to abscond; if he was conquered, my lot would be still more frightful. After this, I said to myself, ‘ M. Clémendot is not worth the trouble of my brother’s dirtying his hands with him; he must perish *by the hand of a woman*; I shall perish also, but I shall inflict punishment perhaps on a perjured witness. For myself, my action shall have enough true witnesses, and they shall have no embarrassment in judging me.

“ Such are the ideas which that day assailed me; I paid no more attention to all that was said to me, but I ruminated with ardor on the means of procuring myself a loaded pistol. To go to a gun-smith’s would have created suspicions; and then, ammunition was necessary, and I knew not the manner of employing it; the quantity even, I did not recollect. I had no sleep for a single minute of the night; I was in a sort of delirium.

“ I rose very early; I had seen Madame Pons’s mantua-maker pass by, and wished to send in search of her; when she entered, to ask me for a gown which I had desired her to have dyed; I told her, to go to Madame Pons, and ask of her for me a loaded pistol, having no doubt that her husband, her brothers, or her nephew, had one. I assured her, that I would not let it off; that not a person alive should know that Madame Pons had furnished me with this weapon: but I exacted from her friendship, that she would send it me as soon as possible. This lady had more good sense than myself, she absolutely refused what I asked of her, but I did not thence abandon the hope

of putting my project in execution. It was then that, losing all reason, I wrote to the Prefect the letter, No. XI,* in which I told him, that he would

* No. XI.—“ I have not for one instant been able to doubt of your kindness towards me ; you gave me proofs of it yesterday evening at the first president’s house, which I shall not forget during life. I saw in your eyes all the excess of your sensibility, and of your interest respecting me and my father, and you have been enabled to believe that I was going to make confessions? What other than M. d’Estourmel has a right to my confidence? You are desirous of my secret ; I agree to it ; soon shall it be public. Soon, perhaps, shall you repair to the fountain head to solicit my pardon. I promise you every explanation relative to certain phrases which you have deemed obscure in my letters. You shall know the cause of my agitation, stronger yesterday than ever. You shall know my character, which nobody knows, and which I have taken little pains to make known ; for if all the world judges me, I judge myself also.

“ I passed the evening with the President, M. Plantade, and another judge. I said nothing to them : one word escaped me in a moment of exasperation, which appeared to strike the President ; I checked myself. I have been told that I should not appear in court to-day ; but as I am summoned, I must be at the challenge of witnesses, at nine o’clock. I shall have the honour of seeing you, when you shall judge of my words : do not despise me, Prefect ; believe that I am not worthy of being despised ; and your contempt is torture to me. I ask you for secrecy until the very moment in which I shall be permitted to speak to you : you promise not to show my letter. But you will not believe me : nevertheless, I swear that I will tell you the truth. What a horrible night ! How slowly the hours seem to creep along to the wretch who counts them : and my child, he sleeps peaceably beside me ! I am condemned to lose him ; I see it, I cannot avoid it.

“ Receive, &c.

“ E. MANSON.”

be very shortly, at the fountain head to solicit my pardon.*

“Finally, I returned to the tribunal. I was sorrowfully seated in a corner, when Amans, who on the previous days, had affected to pass and repass near me without saying any thing to me, made me a sign that he wished to speak to me: I followed him to a grand terrace, where we could walk; he embraced me, and told me that he pitied me.—‘Well and good,’ said I, ‘I excite then still some emotion in you: I thought that you had forgot me, and that my face even did not recall me to your recollection.’ I reproached him respecting his *important deposition*, and asked him, from whence he had drawn his materials for making it. He assured me, that he had never asserted that I had told him that I was at Bancal’s. I believe it well, replied I, otherwise, the Cleobolus of the department would deserve to be lodged in bedlam.

“Amans told me that his testimony signified nothing; that he had even given it with regret, and that M. Lavergne was the cause of it. I told him to impart to me the tenor of his deposition. He told me that respecting one circumstance, I had asked of him, ‘If you were at the murder, what would you have done?’—Well, and does this prove that I was actually there?’ We had often started this question with my mother, and other persons: some said, I should have

* These words of Madame Manson were not explained until now. She meditated revenge, which would lead to a capital punishment: here is the secret of this species of prior solicitation, which has not a little contributed to making it supposed, that she had some participation in a crime already committed.

defended the unfortunate Fualdes : others said, I should have cried out for help : others, I should have died of fright. Must one thence imply, that all those who have spoken thus, may have been at Bancal's. He spoke to me in the sequel of Bousquier's deposition ; but I have carried my reflections on this subject too high.

“ Your nephew appeared to me convinced that I was at Bancal's house, and that I owed my life to Jausion. He used a vast number of arguments with me on the subject, which you have seen reported in the information, as well as his decision upon the *oath* ; but all this was very useless to me, who was not in any of the cases in which he supposed me.

“ After I quitted Amans, the five young men, to whom M. Clémendot had spoken at the coffee-house, approached me ; they were Captain Palmier, M. Dejean, M. Julien, called *Berjou*, Messrs. Ginesti and Palsou. They assured me, that in their deposition there was nothing offensive to me. That they had effectually hindered M. Clémendot from holding any discourse to my prejudice ; that a thousand reasons might have carried me to Bancal's ; that there were washerwomen there ; that nobody suspected I had an assignation ; that I had only to speak : that I should rid the earth of these monsters ; that they would carry me in triumph through the town.

“ It was Ginesti, who said this to me, and who further called to mind those national feasts, in which a woman represented Truth. I replied to all this conversation, that my intention was to speak according to my conscience ; but that in order to make myself

better understood, they must lend me a loaded pistol, because I was afraid. One of them promised me one; but I did not require it of him. The next day my anger had subsided; religion and reason returned; but this last did not long dwell with me.

“The morning of the next day, I again went to the President; I spoke to him of the imprudence which the accused had been guilty of, in saluting me in the court. I told him that it had made me mad; that every body was persuaded that I protected Jausion, and that he had saved my life: ‘but you knew nothing of it?’ ‘Nothing, Sir; I swear to you that I knew nothing of it.’ ‘Compose yourself then, child, you are desperate, indeed.’ I wept and wrung my hands. He told me that I might reproach Jausion with his effrontery in saluting me, and even through him address such questions to him, as I judged proper; he persuaded me to take courage.

“M. Grénier, my dear mother, is an excellent man: in the affair of M. Fualdes, he has evinced admirable impartiality; every one has not done him justice. In quitting him, I went to the Prefecture to withdraw the letter, which I had had the extravagance to send there, the Prefect was unwilling to return it to me, he demanded an explanation of it from me. I made him importune me a little, and then I told him, in troth I wished to kill M. Clémendot, in order that Edward might not kill him.

“If you know M. d’ Estourmel you can judge of the air with which he listened to me: he ridiculed me and kept my letter, which has been printed and read by all France, and which nobody can explain.

“ The Prefect made me enter into his closet, where I found Victoire; who appeared to me to have been put to the question; but, in spite of the chagrin which possessed me, I had all the difficulty in the world, to refrain from laughing, on hearing the conversation of the Prefect with this woman. She wished to speak the French tongue, but fright, and the fear with which her interlocutor doubtless inspired her, made her say such droll things, that the bare recollection of them makes me laugh still in the prison of the Capucins, where I have been for more than two months, and where I laugh but little.

“ Victoire had seen Gustavus the day that he played the important scene with me, at my father's: she told him that it was incredible that I could deny being at Bancal's house, since after having deposed it at the Prefecture, I had told her so. Gustavus repeated this to my father, which was worth this pretty confrontation and its consequences to me. My father also told the Prefect that he felt more anxious about nothing, than sending in search of Madame Redoulés; and here we have doubtless the history of a famous witness in a criminal suit.

“ Nobody shall say, fountain, I will not drink of thy water. Who would have told me six months ago, that I should quench my thirst so often at that of the Capucins. I persuaded Victoire to go away, and when I was alone with the Prefect, I anew entreated him to return me my letter; he was not willing ever to consent to it. I then took leave of him, and on retiring, told him, when I am in court Jausion's face will lengthen, he would rather that I should be the

woman shut up at Bancal's, but I, perhaps, shall cause her discovery. I again passed the entire day in the witnesses' room. I had seen M. Blanc des Bourines with Charles Colrat, who is also summoned, as having made an appointment with me at Bancal's; but this poor young man was not at Rodez on the 19th of March.

"M. Blanc was walking with Charles. I believed that he had found the means of entering into our room, and that he was in the number of the curious: he came and set down one afternoon near me, and said to me, 'Good God, Madam, how I pity you, how will you extricate yourself from this affair!' 'I know nothing at all about it,' said I, 'but I will assert no falsehood before the court.'

"I forgot to tell you, my dear mother, that Amans, during our conversation on the previous day, had told me, that for a considerable time the rumour was circulated at la Montagne,* that there was a woman at Bancal's; that the names of *Manson* and *Enjalran* would be compromised in the affair of M. Fualdes. 'You bear both names,' said my cousin to me, 'and here is Ariadne's web. But this web, far from aiding in extricating us from the labyrinth, has only made those who have followed it, wander still more, and Madame Manson, born an Enjalran, is not the daughter of Minos.'

"I asked M. Blanc, who often goes to la Montagne, if he had heard what my cousin had repeated to me, spoken of: he told me, that, two months since, he knew all the story of what M. Clémendot had done to

* A portion of the ancient province of Rouergue, thus named.

me. He then leant close to my ear, and told me, Madame Pons reckons much upon you. I assured him that she was under no obligation to me; that I should speak the truth, as I had promised her. M. Blanc had a very embarrassed air; he passed two hours with me, after which he quitted me.

“About nine in the evening, I learnt something very important, but I dare not tell it to any body. M. Fualdes’s son was the only one in whom I was able to confide. I had seen this unhappy young man the day of our Lady: whilst I was at my window he was passing in the street; my heart told me that it was him. I felt my tears flow at the sight of him; he cast a look of contempt on me: let him have read evil in my thoughts. He believed me paid by the murderers of his father.

“I wrote to M. Fualdes, that I had something most essential to communicate to him. I carried my letter myself at five in the morning of that day, so fatal to the accused, since the jury pronounced a verdict of Guilty against them. A servant took my letter, I recommended it to his care; I had written the day before to my father, you know in what terms.

“Weary of hearing it said, that M. Enjalran took an interest in the accused, and stopped his daughter’s tongue by his menaces, I wrote that famous letter which has made so much noise; sure that it would be read in court, and that I should justify my father in the eyes of the public.*

* “I beg my father to tranquillize himself: he will be satisfied, if it is really true that he takes no interest in the accused; as to myself, I have strong proofs that he does not take any in them; yet I am

“ In going from M. Fualdes’s I passed my father’s house ; he was still in bed, but he did not sleep : he reflected on this extraordinary letter, of which at the first blush, he demanded an explanation from me ; I told him that he would one day know it. He declared to me that he was going to carry it to the President. I replied that he was the master. In fine, as he wished absolutely to know what I should say before the court, and that I made no answer but ‘ the truth, nothing but the truth,’ he grew angry, and I escaped without its being possible for him to retain me.

“ Returned home, I found there the Prefect’s porter, who begged me, on the part of his master, to repair immediately to the Prefecture. This surprised me, but I was much more astonished, when I found M. Fualdes’s son in the Prefect’s closet ; the latter asked me if I wished to be alone with M. Fualdes, to which

distrustful after all that has happened to me. I am decided on striking a grand blow : all the Court is going to be astonished. I will speak the entire truth, the wretches shall perish, and such—burn my letter :—if it was suspected, all would be lost ; the counsel for the defendants would take their measures. Every thing was cleared up to me yesterday, and nobody can doubt it. Above all, let not the first President intimidate me ; if the blood mounts into my head, as yesterday, at the summoning of the witnesses, I should be able to say nothing. I shall require all the necessary presence of mind, and I should wish, if possible, to be warned some time before appearing.

“ You have given me your curse ; you desire my death ; you refuse me succour : I am going to lose the only one which I could expect, for M. Pons had shared her bread with me : it matters not, you are my father, and your daughter is disposed to sacrifice every thing to you, and will never lose her tenderness and her respect for you—take care of this letter.”

I replied in the affirmative, and the Prefect withdrew.

“ The presence of the unfortunate person whom I had opposite to me, penetrated me with the most painful emotion. I knew his suspicions, he believed me sold; he asked me what I had to say to him. I charged him to warn his counsel to take care that there should be no motives for repealing the proceedings; he appeared to pay little attention to this advice. Great God, how far was I from imagining, that the advice which I gave him, was soon going to make me anxious that these fatal proceedings might be annulled.

“ M. Fualdes wished to obtain from me, the avowal that I was present at the murder of his father, and that I knew the authors of it; he told me that I was, perhaps, about being confronted with a witness who would confound me: I asked him, if there was really any one who would depose that I was in Bancal's house on the 19th of March: he replied, ‘ that that was the key to the whole affair.’ ‘ Ah! well,’ said I, give me this key, why do you distrust me, I am more in your interest than you think.’ Then, M. Fualdes, with an air of settled sorrow and of candour, which penetrated me, said, ‘ No, Madam, there is not a witness who can prove that you were present at the assassination; but I do not doubt that you were there, and that you were acquainted with every thing.’

“ He spoke to me of my connexion with Madame Pons; I assured him that this lady would not make me deceive justice. They had doubtless spoken to him

of my passion for my son ; he enlarged greatly regarding him, and seeing that his recollection softened me, made me foresee the lot which I prepared for him. M. Fualdes has in his manner, something energetic, much more easily understood than described. He perceived the effect which he produced on me, and stopped me when I wished to go out. ‘ Madam,’ said he, ‘ pity a child who demands vengeance for the murder of his father ; you know the assassins, and you will not name them ; one of them saved your life, but is he on that account less infamous ? Jausion will be condemned to the galleys, but that is not enough, he ought to lose his head ; he is more guilty than Bastide—it is he who is the author of the conspiracy ; I think I see him plunging the fatal knife : I was seized with secret horror the first time that this monster presented himself to my view, after the horrible catastrophe which deprived me of the best of fathers.’ I was senseless. ‘ You believe them guilty, are you thoroughly convinced they are so ?’ I repeated. ‘ Oh, Madam,’ M. Fualdes said to me, ‘ you alone have the air of doubting it, you alone would save them ; but no, I deceive myself, a powerful, and by you a respected authority, hinders you. I believe that you comprehend me.’

“ A mortal chill took possession of me ; I saw that my suspicions were well founded, my head grew disordered ; I became like a mad person ; I said, ‘ you believe them guilty : Well, they shall perish ; you shall be revenged.’ I have little recollection of all that he added during two hours that our interview lasted. I know that about ten o’clock the Prefect re-

turned with the President, to ask me if I wished to be heard this day. I immediately replied, that I was not in a condition to be so; but M. Fualdès, who saw me in the disposition in which he wished me, insisted on it so much, and the two other gentlemen joined themselves so earnestly with him, that they determined me on appearing in court at two o'clock.

“ I remained again alone with M. Fualdès during some minutes, and I must do him the justice to say that he asked nothing from me but the truth; but he was so convinced, that his conviction passed into my mind, and produced the most terrible effects in it.

“ When I left the Prefecture, I had a wild air; I must have frightened the people who met me. A woman who saw me passing, said to a soldier: ‘ cannot you give this villanous woman some blows with your musket? perhaps she will then speak the truth.’

“ Such, my dear mamma, is the discourse which was held in my presence. Arrived at home, I drank two dishes of coffee, which failed in killing me. For a vast many nights I had not slept; my blood was on fire. I dressed myself. The President had advised me to adopt the remarkable costume, that I had when he saw me the first time; I followed his advice, and put on a black gown with a white frill round the bosom, a black hat and veil. It is, doubtless, by means of this accursed veil, that some of the accused thought they had recognised the woman of the closet; but then I was not so well instructed as I am at this day.

“ I repaired to the court, and went into the wit-

nesses' room, waiting till they might summon me: I was in a state well worthy of pity: want of sleep, sorrow, the *conversation of the morning*, and the quantity of coffee, had actually so irritated my nerves, that I trembled, and could not support myself. The recollection alone makes me still tremble to such a degree, that I have difficulty in holding my pen. My God! what will become of me at Albi, before the court of Toulouse? You know, my dear mamma, how little effort is required to frighten me; I am alarmed on hearing the cry of fire. Now that you know, that you can appreciate what has preceded the sitting of the 22d of August, you will be less astonished at what passed there.

“ At two o'clock, a bailiff came to call me. I followed him. My situation could only be envied by a person that was conducting to execution; I was as pale as he could be. I will not depict to you what I experienced when I saw myself on the witnesses' bench. On one side, the imposing retinue of justice, that of crime which environed the accused, *my entire conviction* of their culpability, the ferocious looks of some of them, the profound silence that reigned in this immense hall, the attention of the public which filled it, and which expected the revelation of an important secret—the suspicions of this same public against my father—the sight of the unhappy son of the victim whom it was necessary to avenge—finally, the image of Christ, which I had before my face, and which recalled to me my duty: so many united objects, so many tumultuous ideas—I could not resist them, I fainted.

“But in regaining the use of my senses, I did not re-find that of my judgment! I recollect but one idea which incessantly pursued me. I constantly thought that I saw a bloody knife suspended over my head, or plunged in the breast of my son. You know the rest, my dear mamma; you have perused the informations; and as often as I read over again the details of this fatal sitting of the 22d, I ask myself, ‘is it, indeed, you who have pronounced all this? Could you possibly have done and said so many wild extravagances?’ In going out of the court, I was conducted by Amans and M. Hippolite de la Gondalie; we went to Madame d’Ornes; I found Eliza there, who advanced towards me with a pouting air, and appeared to be afraid of embracing me. ‘Oh!’ said I, ‘if you do not wish it, you are going to lose more than I.’ I do not recollect if she embraced me, I know that she proposed to me a private conversation, in which she wanted to force me to confess to her that I was in Bancal’s house. ‘You will be very cunning,’ said I. ‘But,’ said she, ‘I have almost certain proof of it.’ ‘Yes, you have always proofs of what never exists; you are so often deceived, that you ought to correct your suspicious character.’ I however followed her into a room, where she amused me with an absurd tale, which struck me so little that I have forgotten it.

“I had afterwards a long conversation with Amans, and I brought him almost to believe that I was not present at the murder. In fine, after having passed three hours at Madame d’Ornes, I returned into

my room, where I found the general with many officers of the legion of Var; they placed a guard for my security, as they told me; but I believed, and I still believe, that it was to fortify me against the attacks of certain emissaries and distributors of letters. The military remained a long time at my house. An officer told me that Jausion, on entering the prison, had said, 'I am lost, this woman has been my death.' Another told me, that M. Romiguière would abandon the cause of Bastide, if I added a single word; and I, that thought always I had said nothing, because I recollected nothing! At last, M. Belcastel entered, and sat down near me, saying, 'Clarissa, for I please myself in still giving you this name, hear the advice of a friend: why do you obstinately endeavour to conceal the truth? It is no crime to have been at Bancal's; I assure you that there is none of our ladies who will be ashamed to be in your company, if you will render society the service which it demands: speak, speak, and I will give you my countenance to appear in the town, which I should not do if you keep silence; in short, my brother, the Marquis de Bournazel, is coming here this evening to your house, to engage you to unveil this frightful affair.'

"It was assuredly a great honor that these gentlemen did me; but whatever price I might attach to their favor, I could not act against my conscience. Victoire, who saw that I had three centinels, and who still thought me badly watched, came to sleep with me; we neither of us had any sleep. I was again to be heard the next day. The general came

to carry me to the court : but, as I was not dressed, he left an officer of the legion, who waited for me, and gave me his arm.

“ The sitting of the 23rd August was very tempestuous for your daughter ; the interest which I had inspired the day before gave place to the most profound contempt. The women who had shed floods of tears on the Friday, would have spit in my face the next day ; on that day, the accused and their counsel had regained a little courage ; in going out, M. Flaugergues reconducted me home, and remained with me. He said the most soothing things to me. But you know him, my dear mamma ; you know of what delicacy he is capable ; he told me to choose the person in whom I could place the greatest confidence, to intrust him with my secret, and to conduct myself after his advice ; that, even in justice, he would not be obliged to unveil what I should intrust to him. I thanked him ; I assured him that I had nothing to say ; and that if I was in the situation in which he supposed me, I should not have far to go to find a person who would most merit my confidence. He quitted me, and I had still a centinel during the evening.

“ The next day, Amans entered into my room, ‘ you are,’ said he to me, ‘ an astonishing woman ; I have seen a letter which you have written to the president, I know not from whence you draw your ideas, but there are some of them sublime ; you express yourself, in speaking of gratitude, like the greatest masters.’ ‘ You flatter me,’ said I. For the rest, I believe that with a little care, they might have render-

ed me a little less foolish than I am. 'Thus far,' said Amans to me, 'your character is good, take care you do not spoil it.' 'If you continue to suppose that I was at Bancal's,' said I to Amans, 'I know not what you can find so good in me.'

" 'When a woman cannot make her sex's virtues shine in her,' replied my cousin, 'she ought to endeavour to acquire those of a man; I believe that is what you have done, you are not on that account less amiable in my eyes.' 'Listen to me,' said I, 'if the truth discovers itself, as I hope it will, I shall be more interesting than the vile woman of the closet.'

" Amans quitted me, I disposed myself also to go to the Court. My little child wished to follow me, I consented to it. At mid-day, when the sitting was suspended, according to custom, and hardly any body remained at the bar, but some persons that were coming and going, the little boy said to me, in a very low voice, 'Mamma, Bastide has quite the appearance of having killed a man.' I asked him, if he knew him, 'Oh!' said he, 'I believe I know him, he is near the woman dressed in black, and the short gentleman—that must be him.' He was not deceived, the morning of the next day, Amans entered my house with an air of consternation, 'what is the matter with you?' I said, 'How you have abused me! how you have seduced me! I could have believed you for an instant. I could have believed that you dealt fairly. I had raised an edifice which is just tumbled to its foundation; you say, you were not at Bancal's house? Very well, I know the person who gave you the meeting there.' 'You are very clever;

but you must make me a partner in your great discoveries, in order that I may rejoice at them also.' 'I do not laugh,' said my cousin to me, 'and I have passed the most horrible night; I am almost as wretched as on the day when my poor father expired in my arms—you are lost: I could wish not to have known you.' I yesterday saw Blanc des Bourines, I questioned him, and his embarrassed air, his ambiguous answers, fully proved to me, that he knew more of it than he chose to say; do not go and concert with him, for I shall know it.'

"I begged Amans to be easy; I told him, that I did not see that my situation was more desperate than the day before; that all the world believed me the woman of the closet, and that I should be thought so always until the truth appeared; your nephew quitted me a little less agitated.

"Some days afterwards, I saw M. Flaugergues, who appeared touched with my situation, and disposed to give me every assistance to extricate me from it. I spoke to him of the bonnet given by a lady to little Madeline, on the 20th of March. He advised me to go myself to the Almonry, to ascertain the stuff of which this bonnet was composed. 'Perhaps,' said he, 'this will lead you to some happy discoveries.' I wove the cloth of the winding-sheet which must envelope me; I told M. Flaugergues, that I would follow his advice. Nevertheless, I had in some degree lost sight of this affair, when a person seated near me in court, said to me: 'a young lady has just been summoned, perhaps she will give us some insight into this:' another person added, the moment

after, ' we are going to see a woman appear, who is said to have been at Bancal's house; her lover has spoken; it appears, that having repaired late to the rendezvous, he found the gate shut.' You can imagine, my dear mother, the effect that this discourse made upon me; I was inclined to throw myself on my knees, and exclaim: ' Oh, Providence! you have taken pity on me' I turned towards the first person who had spoken to me; I put some other questions to him. He apprised me, Miss Pierret had just been designated to the President, as knowing a great deal respecting the affair of M. Fualdes; on a sudden, I called to mind, that it was she who had so well instructed me regarding it, on the 23rd of March. I recalled all our conversations on this subject; I recollected that Madam Constans came to my house one day, after the departure of Rose, and that she had told me, that the intention of the latter, was to remain in the country all the time that the proceedings respecting M. Fualdes should last. I passed many days in reflection; they waited with impatience the arrival of Rose in Court; each day she was announced, and never did she appear. I was told, that she had been ill since I was summoned, that she had found herself unwell, on hearing the words reported, which escaped me at the sitting of the 22d August:—*nobody pitiés me!* all this confirmed me so much the more in the idea I entertained, that Rose was the woman in the closet, but it was a very different thing in the sequel. I called to mind the advice of M. Flaugergues, and determined on following it, I begged Madam Castel to send me the

mantua-maker, who had made Madeline Bancal's bonnet. She came instantly, and informed me, that they had sent her a sleeve of a taffety spencer, of a dark colour, to make the bonnet; that they had taken away all the remnants, but, that if I would come to the Almonry with her, perhaps we could see this bonnet, and she should be sure to recognize it. We then went there. As this woman was known to little Bancal, she first presented herself; I remained at the gate; she returned in an instant afterwards, to tell me, that Madeline had sent the bonnet to her mother, who had caused a black one to be sent to her, on account of the mourning for her father. I had this child called, she came; I looked earnestly at her, and said to her, 'I come from the Court; your mother has confessed every thing, she will save herself; as for you, who do not wish to speak, they will send the gendarmes to take you up: I have demanded your pardon, hoping to bring you to speak the truth.' Madeline looked at me, my air made an impression on her; I asked her, if M. Fualdes was not killed at her house; she answered yes, and gave me the details which we knew. I asked her, if there was a lady at her father's house during the assassination. I promised her a crown piece, if she could be the means of my knowing her; she then said, that the woman was veiled; I lifted my veil entirely up, and said, *look at me, am I this woman?* the little girl answered me, that she had not seen her face, because her veil was very thick, descended down to her knees, and was black. Remark, my dear mother, that all this conversation took place in the presence of the

mantua-maker, who did not leave us. With what openness have I acted, and it is this has ruined me : one must have somewhat of Machiavelism in the age in which we live ; without it who can flatter himself with succeeding ?

“ After the circumstance of the black veil, which I thought I so well understood, I wished to know no more about it ; I took Madeline by the hand to conduct her to the Prefecture, but the Syndic opposed it. I went in search of the Prefect ; he came to me with a napkin in his hand, and his mouth full : it was the hour of his dinner : I imparted to him my discoveries : he begged me to return to the Almonry, where he would instantly repair. Indeed, he did not make me wait long ; he came, accompanied by two gentlemen, who I have since learnt, were the Sub-Prefect of Espalion, and M. Bonald de Milhau, the younger. The Prefect, as well as these gentlemen, questioned little Bancal as to the lady of the closet ; she made almost the same story which M. Clémendot recounted to me on the night of the 27th July. The Prefect demanded of Madeline if this lady was of my height, and begged me to stand up ; the little girl answered that she was not quite so tall as me, and *infinitely fatter*.

It was almost night ; little Edward demanded my care ; I begged the Prefect to allow me to withdraw, but he persuaded me still to remain a short time. He went out in order to go, as he said, and apprise the President of what had passed. I then remained with the two other persons and Madeline, who, once launched out in the career of revelations, could no

more stop herself. The Prefect soon returned with four gentlemen whom I could not distinguish, because it was night. I thought however that I recognized the voice of M. Plantade; I took leave, and M. de Lastic, Sub-Prefect of Espalion, gave me his arm to reconduct me to my house. It is inconceivable that I should hold a conversation with him from the Almonry to the Rue de Touat, and that I should afterwards not have recollected him in court, where I have seen him several times successively, seated opposite to me, and employed in designing my portrait. He came and spoke to me at the sitting of the 8th September: I have constantly asked, who was the tall gentleman who accompanied me on the day that I was at the Almonry. It is only in prison that I learned to whom I had this obligation.

“ I already thanked God for having saved me from shipwreck; I believed the tempest was appeased, while the storm was over my head, and the thunder was about to burst forth. I made a fervent prayer, and laid down. I anxiously waited the morrow, hoping to obtain an ample justification. I wrote a letter to Amans, of which he comprehended nothing; he told me; doubtless this was the cause that he paid me in the same coin; his answer was algebra to me; I preserve it as an enigmatic monument.

“ I returned to Rodez at an early hour, and repaired to Court, always hoping to see Miss Pierret appear there; but I still expected her in vain. On that day I wrote to her towards evening, and had my letter carried by my hostess, who gave me an account of the effect which this letter produced upon

her : I understood that she had wept, that she could with difficulty speak or walk, and that she finished with saying, that she did not know what Madam Manson wanted.

“ My letter was simple: I begged Rose, if she knew any thing respecting the murder of M. Fualdes, to say it; and to extricate me from the horrible situation in which I was. I received no answer.

“ By the effect of a destiny, constant in persecuting me, of that fatality which unceasingly pursues me, I found myself placed in Court, near an advocate of Albi, a zealous friend and great admirer of M. Romiguière, having made the journey to Rodez, expressly to take part in his success in the grand cause which he was going to plead. This young man oftentimes addressed me, in order to tell me handsome and flattering things. I first thought that he was the man who had given me his arm, the day that I was at the Almonry; he suffered me to believe it, and I should still be persuaded of it, if he had not at last undeceived me. He made use of the pretext of a letter, with which he was charged by one of my brothers, and he came to pay me a visit; sometimes even he accompanied me as far as my house. He went early to the Court, in order to be able to procure himself a place near my chair, which was guarded by a private centinel, near those of the officers of the legion: I was the only witness who had a chair, all the rest were placed on benches. I know not why I had so many privileges, for they were very much dissatisfied with me.

“ The young advocate always spoke to me very

loud, and manifested, without putting any restraint on himself, the interest which he took in the accused: he expressed himself on the subject with the greatest candour, pretending that they would be acquitted any where but at Rodez. He was far from perceiving the consequences of his words: I told him, 'take care, or you will be stoned; keep your opinion to yourself, otherwise you commit me.' Indeed I was followed, spied, listened to. What I had foreseen came to pass: they imagined that this advocate was an emissary of M. Romiguière, and they were more and more convinced of my understanding with the accused: in consequence, after some days, M. Rous, surnamed the *rich*, a merchant of Paris, who often sat near me, and who had overheard the discourse of young Albigeois, sought a quarrel with him; and threatened to lodge a complaint against him in Court. The next day, the chief of squadron of the gendarmerie came to tell him, without any ceremony, to change his place, to leave Madam to herself, (speaking of me) that she knew what she had to do, and that, if he continued this kind of conversation he would arrest him. The advocate did not dispute the matter, he did nothing more than entreat.

" You remember, my dear mamma, that you wrote to me, that, if I had not an exact acquaintance with the murder of M. Fualdes, I ought to demand the liberty of speaking, in order to destroy a conviction founded on my conduct at the sitting of the 22d; and that I ought to hinder a judicial murder. I followed your instructions; I wrote to the President

who had me summoned into the Council-chamber.— I imparted my fears to him : he answered me in two words, that the court would not refuse to hear me before the close of the proceedings. I found his manner very severe. You know that I was summoned the 8th of September : you know how I covered myself with shame in searching out the truth. Rose denied having known me before the month of July ; she denied having ever spoken of the affair of M. Fualdes to me ; but she did not assert this falsehood with impunity ; she trembled in speaking, and left many people persuaded that she was not telling the truth.

“ Madame Constans had just exhibited the most ridiculous scene ; her husband had dreamt that I had said that I was at Bancal’s ; and this woman, sooner than contradict him, set up a show of blubbering, hesitated, and for ever convinced the court, the jury, and the public.

“ Two days afterwards I was told, from Amans, to repair to Olemps ; Edward was arrived there, and was to communicate some important matters to me : it was your celebrated interrogatory ; to which I answered, I hope, to the extent of your desires.

“ I thought I perceived in my brother an extraordinary air ; and, as all the people who wear this air are thought to be well informed in the affair of M. Fualdes, I made no doubt but my brother might know great things. He, however, swore to me that he knew nothing. Madame Rodat was very cold with me ; as to Eliza, she had given me a specimen of her contemptuous air ; but, as it is not my custom to

make advances to people who draw back, I left my cousin, and discoursed with her brothers and mine.

“ Your god-daughter, they tell me, is married ; I hope that her husband will never enter Bancal’s house ! Eliza told me one day that her attachment for me was very solid ; but that I did not love her in the same manner.—‘ I know,’ said I, ‘ that, provided you were assured that I was interred in consecrated ground, you would be very much consoled in learning my death ; it is not the same with me—every one has his manner : for example, if they had just told me that a woman, for whom I had a strong attachment, was found in a house of ill-fame, I should not believe this news on the first report ; I should require satisfactory proofs, and would not deal harshly with her, to make her confess it to justice ; especially if she had certified me that the fact was false.’ I learnt of Amans all that the little Bancal had told me ; he recommenced his doubts that I was at her father’s house on the 19th of March, and told me that he would come and assist at the sitting of the next day. Edward appeared to me sorry for the scene which had taken place during that of the 22d of August, when I had assured him that I had no acquaintance with the murder ; I said to him, without entering into all the details which I have here given to you, that I had not been mistress of myself. I again repeat it to you, my dear mother : justice may punish my conduct, but it would not know how to make me repent of it. What I have done voluntarily I thought it my duty to do ; for the rest heaven will not demand an account from me of this imposture.

“ The President treated me so ill, that I had not power to say any thing in my justification. My letter to my father, as well as his to the President, were read at this sitting, and produced an effect contrary to that which I had expected from them : at last, grown desperate from perceiving that they did not listen to me, I provoked the Attorney-general, in order that he might form his conclusions against me, as he had announced.

“ I had written to M. Fualdes, that he had but one way of discovering the truth ; that he must have me arrested, and that then perhaps the wretched woman, shut up in the closet, under the alternative of saving an innocent person, or of suffering the guilty to perish, would not hesitate.

“ I judged for myself, my dear mamma ; I had also another end ; I thought that if I did not succeed in discovering the truth, I should at least annul the proceedings, and should not have to reproach myself with having caused wretched persons to perish, with whose guilt I was unacquainted. The Civil Party displayed more artifice than myself ; the Attorney-general placed me under the eye of two gendarmes ; but that was only for an hour, and whilst I was still in court.

“ However we arrived at the moment of pronouncing judgment ; I saw the blood of Jausion and Bastide flowing ; I heard the cries of their wives, and their children. This image pursued me incessantly ; I constantly said to myself, ‘ you alone have caused them to be condemned !’

“ Jausion looked at me and seemed to say to me ; ‘ What have I done to you ? Why do you wish for

my head?' His wife cried out: '*Madam, have pity on my children, you are a mother also, you love your son so much!*' Oh Mamma, put yourself in my place, what would you have done?'

"The 12th of September I underwent a new temptation; I had the air of being provoked by M. Romiguière, and I called out, '*all are not in irons, and the truth may not proceed from my mouth.*' It was this that conducted me to the Capucins; but two days too late.

"You may suppose that I was not in court to hear the sentences of death. I passed a horrible day. In the evening, at the approach of night, I held up my child; who looked through the window on the people who were passing: on a sudden I saw a man who was walking very fast, and held a large knife perfectly naked. I thought that he was coming to cut off our heads; I rushed towards the door and doubly shut it. All the night I saw myself surrounded by blood; it appeared that my bed was bathed with it; I threw myself upon the cradle of my child, I believed him dead; the movement which I gave myself awakened me.

"The next day, Madam Lacombe told me, 'some disaster will happen in this house; for two nights past I have dreamt of nothing but blood; my hair stands an end.'—'Do not tell me that,' said I to my hostess, 'I have the same dreams.' She answered, that hers were always realised.

"The 14th of September (of happy memory) a bailiff came to serve me with a warrant; I received it

with the most perfect indifference. I first repaired to the court, where I was interrogated; from thence I repassed to my house to take my child, and went to prison.

“I was to occupy the chambers which the ladies Jausion and Galtier had just quitted; but my jailer answering for me, kept me at his house. I subscribed to every sort of arrangement; at that moment all was equal to me. The Prefect came in the evening; he put me in mind that he had predicted all that had befallen me; that it was my pleasure to destroy myself. The mayor entered a moment after; they took all possible measures that nothing might be wanting to me. They wished that I should have a room; but as the wife of the jailer seemed desirous to have me, I said that I was very well off, I had every thing that was necessary for me. Indeed, what did I want? My son partook of my lot.

“I passed fifteen days, without scarcely a thought that I was in prison; during the night I suffered much, I had continually fever, accompanied with delirium; I uttered horrible cries. Once it appeared to me that the woman Bancal had poisoned you as well as my son; another time I saw Bastide, in a state of frenzy, reproaching me with having caused his condemnation; I was in his power, he was going to avenge himself. I often saw the accused on the scaffold. One night, they came and rapped roughly at the door, and cried, ‘open!’ the jailor instead of opening it, ran to look out of the window, I thought that we were lost; I took Edward in my arms; I had determined to

perish. At last I learnt that it was a malefactor whom they had taken, and whom they were conducting to prison.

“ My husband who had never troubled himself about the child, who has come into Rodez above twenty times since I dwelt there, without making any inquiry about it—but who had understood from the publicity of the trial that all my solitudes were for this child, bethought himself of snatching it from me, at the moment when it was more precious to me than ever. They informed me at the same time that you wished to see it; I decided on sending it to you, as he was content when he knew that his uncle had come to fetch him! However, when I embraced him, and he perceived some tears which I made vain efforts to restrain, this inestimable infant commenced weeping, and returned into my prison, forgetting every thing in order to console his mother. My reason got the better, I separated myself from him.

“ I was far from foreseeing that his absence would be so long and so painful! It was when I found myself alone, that I discovered I was a prisoner. The veil was fallen, the talisman was broke. I have the misfortune to be a fatalist; I persuaded myself that the presence of my son would preserve me from every evil; he has at least the talent to sweeten them, and to make me support them.

“ When I heard the gates reclosed, which it did not depend on me to have opened, a deadly coldness seized me: I fell on the pavement; I know not how it is that my skull was not fractured. They came to my succour, they wished to recall my son, but I op-

posed it. I passed a painful day; it was followed by many others.

“ My husband caused to be signified to me a suit for separation of body and goods, and demanded my child; we were twice heard by M. Bertrandi as referee; you know his odious conduct with this estimable man.

“ The Prefect seldom passed a week without coming into my prison. I saw also twice the Provost, and Madame Delauro, * who did me a thousand kindnesses; she sent me books, and the newspapers. One day General Despérieres brought a sheet containing a letter addressed to a certain *Dornac du Rosai*: this letter was signed *Pauline Engelrand*; they made me say a heap of things which I do not recollect, for I only read it once; I solely recollect these words: *My only desire is to regain the friendship of my father; I will soon unite myself with my Adela in the abode of peace; and in speaking of the assassins: they are powerful—they are numerous. Oh! the Monsters—Infamous house of Bancal; they shall know that you have never possessed me.*

“ This letter was very long, and has puzzled the readers; I assured the major-general that not a word of it was mine; that I was not called *Pauline*, and that I knew how to spell my father's name.

“ I often saw people at the jailer's, but I spoke to nobody, except in his presence; yet I was informed of the news; I learnt that there were great reasons for annulling the proceedings, and I began again to entertain some hopes of it. One day I was informed

* The mayor's wife.

that Jausion, after having heard his sentence read, addressed himself to the woman Bancal, and to the other accused, and had challenged them to declare if he was present at the murder. The moment was terrible! he greatly exposed himself if he is guilty. They added, that he particularly addressed Missonnier, who not being condemned to death, could profit of his offers; and that, on returning into prison, he had again said, ‘Madame Manson ought to be arrested, and then she would speak the truth.’ What does this unfortunate wretch then wish with me? Does he believe that I was at Bancal’s house? and not having been there himself, does he invoke my testimony? Or rather, not having seen me, does he wish that I should maintain that I was not there? In this last case he will be satisfied.

“The more I think of this horrible affair, the more I lose myself. I am perhaps the person who sees the most obscurity in it; and I pass for having the key of the whole. After having made an exact recapitulation of what I had seen and heard in this trial, I have made many conjectures, which I have entrusted to no person. *I preserve these things, and repass them into my heart.*

“When shall we meet again, my dear mother? I no more put confidence in any body; for no consideration in the world would I be in the secret of the murder; they would finish by drawing it from me, and I should perhaps not be long in repenting of it.

“The proceedings were at last annulled; and soon afterwards I was informed that it was said, that Madame Manson had done it. It is not that I think the

accused will get themselves off at Albi; but they have discovered new witnesses, and it will not be myself, who know nothing about it, who will cause them to be condemned. I shall be easy on that score. You know all the reports that were circulated at my father's expense; in vain have I wished to parry the blows directed against him; in vain have I sacrificed myself. I am myself lost, and have only given more audacity to his enemies. The reptiles of l'Aveyron have vomited their venom. Cursed race! shall the world never be purged of you? My father knew the accusation which was prevalent against him; he never spoke to me of it, but he knew it; I read it in his eyes, in his gestures, in the convulsions of his despair. He was told that I had gone to Bancal's house, and he believed it; and his love for justice and truth carried him above the prejudice which condemned his daughter to obloquy. My father believed me a witness to the murder, and he wished to make me confess it. Hence the persecutions which he made me undergo, and which, according to malicious people, had another end.

“ My father, who worthily filled his place in the magistracy, who was always the terror of criminals when he was their judge, is accused of being the support of the assassins of M. Fualdes!—of even being their accomplice!—a man who, by his delicacy, has disdained to enrich himself during the revolution by means which many people, reputed honest, have not regarded as illicit; a man who has braved this revolution, to such a degree as not to wish to dissemble his opinion, at a time when he saw

himself a prisoner, deprived of his property, the axe suspended over his head—this same man should become all at once a robber, a cowardly assassin! No, he has not suddenly turned a froward character; he does not abjure, at an advanced age, the principles which he gloried in possessing.

“What avails it to have led a life without reproach, to have acquired a spotless reputation, if it depends on some malicious beings to blacken it? Ought one to expect, after having filled a long and honourable career, to descend into the grave covered with ignominy? May my father triumphantly come forth from this struggle! Let him confound his calumniators, a thousand times more dangerous than the monsters to whom I have compared them. In short, let the whole weight of misfortunes light upon me.

“I never can revenge myself upon my enemies; Heaven will take this care for me. I had four of them; they were powerful: two are dead without relief and without repentance: the third fell from a precipice, and his fall has loaded him with infirmities for the rest of his days; the fourth has lost his liberty—who knows what awaits him? It is better to be the oppressed than the oppressor.

“My recital is finished, my dear mother; but suffer me to converse with you; suffer my pen to flow at hazard on the sentiments which I experience. In my captivity, it is my sole alleviation, my sole consolation. Does any one wish to inspire interest at Rodez? let him get himself condemned to death. The receipt is infallible, but I shall not make use of it. One cannot form an idea of the rage of the inha-

bitants of this town against Jausion ; he was the most infamous of wretches ; he alone was the author of the murder of M. Fualdes ; it was he that struck the first blow ; he ought to be cut to pieces. But the sentence once pronounced, I heard them chant their recantation : ‘ Poor Jausion ! ’ said one, ‘ they have judged him too severely ; they had not proofs of his guilt. ’ ‘ What will become of his poor wife ? ’ said another ? ‘ And his poor children ? ’ ‘ A father of a family,’ cried this one ; ‘ how I regret him ! ’ At last they learn that the sentence is annulled, and they cry anew—‘ *To death with him !* ’ This is the world, my dear mamma.

“ It is with almost all the inhabitants of l’Aveyron as with the climate ; it freezes here three quarters of the year ; but as there are some fine days, so there exist also some sensible and good hearts. I have known how to discern them in the multitude ; I have known how to appreciate them ; their name is for ever graven in my memory with the recollection of their kindnesses,

“ In order to understand me, they should say that I was born in one of those fine regions which the Tiber or the Arno water. I dare stand a trial in my own country, which has been said to have so well judged me. It is an impartial posterity that will render me more justice ; it is to its tribunal that I appeal ; it will annul the sentence of my cotemporaries.

“ With what infernal spirits have I been surrounded ! They have pretended that I was sold to assassins ! I hope that this calumny has found credit but with persons themselves capable of similar vena-

lity : their opinion little affects me. . There are souls, I repeat it, worthy of adoration in the universe. May I merit their esteem, and testify to them with warmth, all my gratitude ; the wish of my heart will be fulfilled.

“ I return to my situation : I had learnt in prison that the little girl Bancal pretended that I was the Lady of the Closet, and that she had recognized me. As I know that they fabricate news at Rodez, and that the more they are displeased, the more credulous they are : I gave myself very little trouble about this rumour. Nevertheless, the Prefect assured me that it was true, and that he had it from Madeline herself, who had assured him so at the Almonry, a short time after I had gone out of it, on the day of her important discoveries ; and that she had added, that I had promised her a crown piece, in order that she might declare she did not know me.

“ So much falsehood on the part of an infant of ten years of age surprised me ; but in spite of the assertion of little Bancal, I should easily have justified myself in a country where they were less prejudiced than at Rodez ; for what probability is there, if I was really in this famous closet, that I should have myself gone in search of the only witness who deposes to this fact, and that I should have taken every possible means to make this child speak, whom no person had been able to persuade, either by promises or by threats, to the least confession, and who adhered during five months to the most rigid denial ?

“ Madeline had heard mention of the entire history of a woman, locked up in the closet of her father’s

house, and she repeated it. The first day she spoke of only one lady; now, after her last deposition, there should have been *seven* women in her house on the evening of the 19th of March. Madame Manson was in the closet, into which they forced her to enter; and on this demand from her, what she had done, and why they put her there? They answered, ‘you will know it.’ Afterwards, there were three other ladies; one of whom had black feathers, another green feathers, and the third a bonnet: she named her mother, Anne Benôit, and another girl whom Bousquier speaks of. The history of the green feathers is a mystery which they wished to ascribe to Miss Gipson, who is, I believe, the only woman who wears feathers of that colour. This English lady was at the Almonry to question little Bancal; and one of the gentlemen who accompanied her gave Madeline her lesson to puzzle Miss Gipson. I have this fact from one of our Judges, who is not less persuaded that all which concerns me in Madeline’s deposition is not very conformable to the truth.

“ I have been confronted with this child: she had said, the first time, that she only recognized me by the voice; and on our being confronted, it was by the face: if we meet again, it will perhaps be by the turn of my wit. She has again spoken of the green feathers, and this fact is recorded in her deposition. As for myself, I had a black veil, which descended below my knee, and a red gown. I left the closet while the wretched Fualdes still breathed. I sued for mercy for myself, and I pronounced, with my hand upon the corpse, the most horrible of oaths.

Jausion then took me by the hand, and conducted me as far as the wells of the square of Cité. This is one of the depositions of little Bancal.

“ She said another time, that I had entered into the closet dressed as a woman, and that I had come out of it in man’s cloaths. Why so ridiculous a disguise? if I had put on the habit of a man, it would have been in order not to be recognized in the streets.

“ However absurd may be the deposition of Madeline, it has been adopted throughout. I perceive, my dear mamma, that my folly is become contagious. They have just told me that the woman Bancal had also asserted in prison, that I was at her house on the evening of the murder. I’ll wager this is not true, and that it is a fictitious witness who reports this fact. Bancal, with whom I have been confronted, about fifteen days ago, reproached me with having said that I had been in her house, when I had never set foot in it; and that I saw myself forced to acknowledge the contrary. Besides, if there was a lady in the closet, Bancal, who had introduced her there ought to know her; if she did not know her, how could she assure herself that it was me? she could not confound my visage with that of another: I have not one of those faces that one meets with every where.—It is only in my glass when I am opposite to it that they may see something which resembles me; and if they sell my portrait at Paris, as I have been assured, and pretend a resemblance, it is an arrant counterfeit.

“ The gendarme Monteil has pretended, that

at the sitting of the 8th of September, Bancal had said, in speaking of me, that I always denied having ever been at her house : *let her say so, she was there sure enough.* This woman was at the moment called upon by the President, and she asserted not having said this.—Here is the way in which she expressed herself; she said, ‘*if she was there, let her say so;*’ which is very different. M. Grandet, the defender of Missonnier, heard the discourse as it was held, and repeated it to me. Besides, why should Bancal have retracted the same minute? I spoke to her of this again when I was last confronted with her.—She told me she had expressed herself in the sense which M. Grandet had reported to me. It is certain, my dear mamma, that they have lately told me such extraordinary things, that I often know not what to answer; I open my astonished eyes, and play the part of Sosia.

“ I am sometimes pleased to identify myself with the *individuality* of Bancal’s house, which is not however the *individuality* of the Capucins; for one runs into the field, and the other is behind villainous grates, and a treble door. I torture my mind; I make a thousand conjectures which destroyed each other. I stop however at this last, which appears to me the most reasonable: it seems evident that there was a woman at Bancal’s during the murder. The party of M. Fualdes verily believe that it was me; but be assured that the opposite party is convinced that I know nothing about it; and that it thinks, by its investigations, to shelter itself from suspicion.

“ I do not wish to occupy myself any more about

it: I am become weak on this subject: I here lose all my faculties: I have scarcely any more memory or understanding; nothing remains but a will, which, if it was free, would soon conduct me to the arms of my tender mother, and my beloved Edward.

“ I have often seen people here; Inspectors-General, Prefects, officers of every rank, and curious people, who come expressly to see Madame Manson; and who return, doubtless, little satisfied. You know, my dear mother, that our Prefect intimidates me much: I long believed that my embarrassment arose from the conduct I observed with him. When he speaks to me, I am so foolish I can scarcely answer him. He came one day with M. de Cazes, the Prefect of Albi, brother of his Excellency, the Minister-General of the Police. Your daughter had on that day a double fit of awkwardness. It was impossible for me to articulate a single word so long as these gentlemen remained in my prison. The discourse which M. de Cazes held with me, was little likely to make me regain speech; he told me ‘one of three things:—you will be pursued as an accomplice, as a false witness, or else shut up as a mad person.’ See precisely how it happened that *your daughter became mute*.

“ I remained petrified; but that was not all. M. d’Estourmel charged my jailer to tell me something which this latter could not make me comprehend: I thought that the Prefect of Albi wished to speak to me; in consequence, I wrote to our Prefect that I was always ready to hear M. de Cazes, and should think myself much honoured by his presence. I had doubtless, written in the style of a school girl; but as

I have no more the appearance of one; I did not stand excused. I was told that my letter extremely shocked the Prefect of Albi, who had answered, 'it is done in a trice.' I racked my brains to comprehend what this meant to say; I could not arrive at it. It is always perfectly clear that my design is not, was not, and never will be to deceive any person. I shall, nevertheless, pay dear for an involuntary fault; the least which can befall me, will be to die with fear at Albi, on seeing M. de Cazes.

"After having passed two months in the jailer's house, where I was ruined, because my expenses exceeded my income, I demanded a room and obtained it. By a singular chance I occupied the cell of the famous *father Chabot*, where so many horrible conspiracies were framed; the ladies Jausion and Galtier had inhabited the same apartment during their detention; but they were less to be pitied than myself: they mutually consoled each other; they had a child; they had no gratings. You will know, mamma, that I am indebted for those of my windows to the gallantry of my jailer, and to the care which he takes of my health; he pretends that I am so cunning, that there is no means of trusting me, and that if I had a mind to see my Edward, a height of thirty feet would not stop me; and that I should descend by the casement at the risk of breaking my neck.

"He is always afraid of committing himself; he fears especially that I should have letters pass unknown to him. I have almost a mind to write to M——, solely to prove to him that *bolts and bars*—it is useless to finish it, you know the rhyme. There

is nothing that makes me more impatient, than to hear it said to me unceasingly; what are you doing here? break your chains, it depends upon yourself. Can it enter into a reasonable head that a woman; (and a woman of my character), remains for pleasure in the cell of a Capucin? one must have a very singular taste! ‘Go your ways,’ say they, ‘your place is not in prison.’—‘Oh!’ say I, ‘it is seldom in this world, that any one occupies the place which suits them; I shall always have this advantage, that nobody will come to dispute mine with me.’

“ ‘A pretty honour,’ says another to me, ‘to see you at Albi, on the bench of the accused, seated between Bastide and Jausion?’ ‘Ah, well! Is not our Saviour placed between two thieves? and their crimes were doubtless proved otherwise than by the testimony of some nervous attacks.’ The Jews did not know what the *vapours* were; so I doubt if Mesmer would have made his fortune amongst them. A propos, do you not know that they wished to try magnetism with me, in order to make me tell *my secret*? but as this operation was also a secret, and as nothing is done secretly at Rodez, my *magnetising* has been adjourned.

“ No, my dear mamma, nothing is done secretly at Rodez, except the murder of the unhappy Fualdes. I tremble at the idea that perhaps some innocent person will be sacrificed. What a horrible mystery! If I am included in the accusation, I wish for no counsel; I should be sorry to owe my safety to his eloquence. I will myself plead my cause; and after having acquired the appellation of a singular witness,

the public will perhaps call me still more singular as an accused person.

“ You know, my dear mother, the system of a modern author, your dear countryman,* a great metaphysician, a more astonishing logician, who refuses to allow women a reasonable soul; but as there is scarcely an animal whose *instinct* does not lead him to defend himself when he sees himself attacked, I am going to endeavour to make use of the feeble means that nature has given me for that purpose. I will answer him some day, and if they accuse me of having been *divorced* from good sense, I will console myself with the idea that I am not the only one. †

“ I have just made an amiable acquaintance, it is a young man from Paris, who has had the kindness to come and see me in my prison; he has much wished to take charge of my Memoir, and has pushed his complaisance so far as to travel over eight leagues of our country to carry it to you; without him I should not have had the means of bringing this voluminous epistle within your reach.

“ I am very little inclined to secrecy, and not a line of it goes out without being verified by the Minister for public affairs, who has the oftenest made profit of it at my expense; but all that does not correct me, I write every thing that comes into my head; and whilst they are deliberating on the liberty of the press, I give every latitude to my pen.

* Monsieur de Bonald.

† Monsieur de Bonald has written a book on Divorce.

“ Mr. Clémendot is confined in a fort. It has been reported here, that he had written to me, this is still a new proof of the coin of Rodez. The letter which I have received, and which is said to be from him (as if there was nobody but M. Clémendot who knew how to write) is from that M. Lamire, of whom I have spoken to you, and who is assuredly a little more polite than the aid-de-camp of M. de Wautré.

“ I am going to perish from ennui ; here is the end of my memoir, I have nothing more to do, my embroidery fatigues me, and does not distract my thoughts. I have almost entirely lost my voice. They will no more compare me to saint Huberti!—I can no longer sing, and I have besides but little relish for it—what a state of incertitude!—It is near three months since I was arrested, I do not yet know if I shall be brought to judgment.—What will they do with me? I have not killed M. Fualdes. I did not know that they wanted to kill him, I should have told him so very soon. Yet I have undergone twelve interrogations, three of which have lasted eight hours.—I do not take into the account my conferences with the Prefect, and those with my father, where shall I leave them then : I have lost the account of them.

“ Last Thursday, the council assembled here, to decide on my fate. I am ignorant what are the conclusions of the King's Attorney, and the judgment of the court; but, my God! they do not judge here in the last appeal : the proceedings which concern me, must pass through the hands of the Attorney General of the court of Montpellier, from thence they will

again go to Toulouse, and then they will be sent to my Lord Keeper of the Seals. I am just addressing a petition to his Excellency; judge how it will be received; I a poor country-woman, who have passed my life amongst geese and turkeys, to take upon myself to write to a great lord.

“ I repent of it at this very moment: my letter will not even be read.* These are nearly the terms in which it is conceived; ‘ My lord,—will your Excellency deign to permit, that a wretched prisoner should dare to address herself to you, and may she hope to be favourably received by you? Will the chief of justice be offended, if I come to claim it from him, in order that it may be rendered to me? I am without protection, my lord, without defence, without support; and my sole recommendations with your Excellency, are in your own sentiments of humanity and love for the public good.

“ I am ignorant what language one makes use of with the great; I am accustomed to speak that of the heart. The minister of a Bourbon cannot be unmindful of it: I ought not to employ any other with his Excellency. There is no example, in the annals of justice, of a witness so persecuted as myself. The trial of M. Fualdes is an obscure labyrinth, the thread of which every body has demanded from me, and

* Madam Manson opines badly of the ministerial solicitude: the idea that she occasioned perhaps some actual embarrassment caused by the legislative discussions has awakened her distrust. We have had the honour ourselves to deliver in a private audience, her letter to my Lord Keeper of the Seals, who read it with feeling and with interest.

every body knows as much of it, and many perhaps more, than I do. I am tormented by the two parties at once. That of M. Fualdes cries for vengeance, and accuses me of wishing to save the guilty ; and the contrary party, well aware that I shall say nothing, because I know nothing, assails me still more vigorously.

“ I am a victim, sacrificed I know not to whom ; I am not aware of my enemies. No, my Lord, I am not the woman that was shut up at Bancal’s ; and by a chain of circumstances difficult to believe, I have been brought to say that I was this woman ; such is the nature of the fears which I have experienced, such is the impression which they have produced upon my mind, that I have preferred to pass for an infamous prostitute, sooner than to see them realised.

“ Let not your Excellency reproach me for my conduct at the sitting of the 22d of August ; if the proceedings had not been annulled, I should have myself offered my head—it ought to fall. It matters not that my crime was involuntary ; the consequences of it would have been too dreadful, and I am a striking example of the dangers of conviction.

“ If your Excellency knew all the proceedings of the fatal sitting of the 22d ! If you knew in what state was the unfortunate person who has the hardihood to address these lines to you, and to implore your commiseration ! I am accused at present of being an accomplice in the most horrible of crimes ; the testimony of my conscience re-assures me, death does not alarm me, my Lord ; I have known how to brave it in 1793 ; I was then very young, my parents

were arrested, I partook of their lot, and if they had perished on the scaffold, I would have mounted it with them. In the situation into which I am fallen, death would be a relief to me; with it would finish the terrors of life. But to lose liberty, to live for ever separated from all that is most dear to me, to be deprived of the embraces of my son!—Ah! my Lord, if you judge me guilty, do not punish me thus, you could not invent a more dreadful sentence.

“ I will go, if it is necessary, into a remote country, to hide my sorrows; not my remorse. I leave riches to those who make much of them, there is but one blessing for me; I hold it from nature, it should depend upon her alone to deprive me of it. Let your Excellency design to excuse the despair of a mother. I am alone in my prison; horrible grates, triple doors separate me from the rest of mortals, and they repeat to me without ceasing: ‘ your fate is in your own hands, it depends on yourself to break your chains.’ What do they wish to make me say? that which I do not know, that which I felicitate myself on not knowing.

“ Oh! take pity on me, my lord; they have threatened to send me to Paris: had it pleased God that your Excellency had wished to take the trouble of occupying yourself with my affairs, and of hearing me, I would not have spoke but the exact truth; ought I to expect being sent to the *Inquisition*, under the reign of the best of kings? and you, my lord, the worthy minister of his will, should I in vain implore your justice? may my voice penetrate even to your Excellency: all the world is ignorant that I have

taken the liberty of addressing myself to you, but for that I should not have offered to your sight such bad penmanship as mine. I dare hope that you will pardon me, as well as the boldness with which I have expressed myself, and that you will have some consideration for my just complaints.

“Accept, my lord; the homage of the most profound respect and of the highest consideration.”

“Oh! my dear mother, if I could see his Majesty Louis XVIII. and the august daughter of the unfortunate Marie Antoinette and of Louis XVI., whom we have so often wept for together! The 21st of January is always most sorrowful to me. I can never forget the anniversary of the most dreadful of events.

“I am just tracing some verses on the walls of my chamber; I certainly should leave some marks of remembrance to my successor; I invite him to arm himself with patience, it is a thing with which one cannot dispense here. I forewarn him that the grates are of new iron; the door triple; that both are difficult to pass; that one finds here neither files or chisels; for the jailer is a *prudent man*.

“The trial of M. Fualdes will be judged, they say, the 5th of February: that is, two months hence. The proceedings will last fully another month. It is now two months since I saw my son, which will make it near six. This is speaking to me of eternity itself. Every evening I say to myself, ‘a day again passed and lost to happiness, since I have not embraced my Edward.’ Life is so short, all its moments so precious; and we are often condemned to pass a part of it far from the objects which are dear to us. With

what passion have I desired to have children. I recollect having said one day that I should like better to have a dozen of them, than not to have any: and this title of mother causes all my torments! It is happy to be void of nice feeling: one has few enjoyments, but one is not sensible to pains; and how greatly do they exceed the number of pleasures!

“ I often see little children of the age of mine passing by, but it is not my Edward. A sorrowful foreboding sometimes tells me, that I may see him no more; my dreams represent him to me always dead or dying—yet a good God knows well that I cannot support this misfortune. This idea reassures me.

“ I have his cradle constantly near my bed, but he is not there. Amiable little creature, if we never meet again, what will be the power that can separate us?

“ You shall no more reproach me, my dear mother, with sleeping too long: I lie down always after midnight, and do not sleep till about four o'clock in the morning, and yet rise early. I have every night a fit of fever: they wish to give me medicine; but I do not incline to take any remedy; and I would distrust Hippocrates in curing me: they will not destroy the evil, so long as the cause exists. The sole specific for mine, would be the sight of my son, and my liberty.

“ I have gained one thing in prison; that was just; I have lost so many others in it: I have no more fear of ghosts; you shall not laugh at me any more.

“ The fair of December must have been very fine;

I have seen a vast number of people pass on the great road. Nobody has come to see me to-day. I wished to purchase a drum for my little boy; I have not had any opportunity to do it: but I shall send one to him.

“How many obligations have I to you, my dear mother! I owe you my life, and that of my son. Without you, without your tender cares, my Edward would not exist; he would have died before having seen the day.—And now again, that he is suffering and wounded, that by an imprudence he was very near breaking his arm;* what would become of me, if I did not know he was under your eyes? Ah! if nature has produced some monsters, she has formed also sensible souls, which make us forget them.

“Adieu, my dear mother; make the little angel pray for me. I call to mind always with much emotion, a prayer which I heard him make in the church of our Lady; he did not think that I was paying attention to him, and he said; ‘*my God, grant me the favour of being a very wise man; heal mamma Enjalran, and take away sorrow from mamma Clarisse.*’

“How can one prevent adoring so interesting a child, and particularly when one is the mother of it? But, my poor Edward, he will be unfortunate. The fatality which pursues me, attaches to all whom I love, to all who take interest in me. I am more terrible than Pandora; I spread abroad all kind of evil, and have not a hope.

“Adieu, my son, my sole blessing, my only con-

* The child's arm was actually sprained by a fall, during his mother's captivity.

solation; adieu, my good mother, I take leave of you. May this memoir serve to dissipate your thoughts! may you find in it some alleviation of your pains! my Edward will read it one day; but he will never have an idea of the torments, which he has caused to his unfortunate mother: the heart of man does not feel these things like ours.

“Melancholy possesses me: the future offers me nothing happy; above all, if I judge of it by the past. I am just demanding a priest. I perceive that my courage abandons me: there are moments in which I lose sight of my religion: I forget every thing, except my mother and my child.”

NOTE.

WE think it our duty to place here for those of our Readers, who, since the annulling of the trial at Rodez, have not followed the detail of the divers incidents of the new proceedings, a rapid exposition of the principal facts.

Immediately after the pronouncing of the sentence, which condemned to death Bastidé, Jausion, Colard, Bax, and the woman Bancal ; Anne Benoît and Missonnier, to forced labour for life ; Bousquier, to one year's imprisonment, and a fine of fifty franks ; Madame Manson, having a warrant served on her, was arrested, and conducted to prison on the 14th September.

It is in a religious commonalty, in the cell of a monk, too famous for his revolutionary excesses, that the time passed, which separates the assizes of l'Aveyron from those of Tarn. The suit instituted against her, as suspected of false testimony, has been followed up by the cares of M. Bertrandi, one of the judges of the Civil Tribunal at Rodez ; this wise and skilful magistrate, has known how to associate in his communications with the prisoner, the rigorous obligation of his ministry, with those considerations of condescension and humanity ordained by her sex, and her sorrowful situation.

The Tribunal of Rodez, having taken cognizance of her suit, the papers respecting the proceedings were sent to Montpellier, about the 28th of November last, and this Court decided on the 7th of the following month, that Madame Manson should be judged at the approaching assizes at Rodez.

An act of the Supreme Court has decided it otherwise : the *Moniteur* of the 21st December, publishes the following detail.

“ A decision of the Royal Court of Montpellier, imputing to Madame Manson the charge of false testimony, had ordained, that this lady should be brought before the assizes of l'Aveyron. The

Attorney General being provided against this decision by the statute of the Judges, has demanded that the affair shall be brought before the assizes at Albi, looking to their connexion with the accusation relative to the murder of M. Fualdes. The Court of appeal, in the criminal division, on the report of Mr. Buschop the counsel, and the arguments of M. Giraud, the advocate general, has accepted this demand, and sent back Madame Manson, before the court of assizes at Albi."

During the course of these successive events, the suspected persons upon whom the most heavy charges of the accusation seem to weigh, have made an effort to withdraw themselves from justice. We shall make an abstract of a letter, which was addressed to us from Rodez, at the time by our correspondent.* This letter was also printed in the 346th number of the Gazette of France, of the 12th of December.

On the night of the 3rd and 4th December, the twenty-three prisoners confined in the house of the Cordeliers, made an attempt to escape. Jausion and Bastide were the only ones in this prison, who were included in the trial for the murder of M. Fualdes: the rest of their companions are condemned for theft. Bax, Missonnier, Colard, and Bancal, are, as it is known, in the convent of the Capucins.

For a long time past, Bastide assiduously occupied himself in making hampers with trusses of straw, and his wife preserved the power of seeing and of speaking to him, through the grates before the prison.

"Ah! well!" said he, one day to her, "I send you frequently about my work, and propose to continue it." "Do not, however, make hampers, without end," said she, "the house is already full of them." "I will make you, then, a warming basket (a piece of furniture, to dry linen at the hearth). Besides," continued he, "in

* We published under the title of the *Parisian's Stenograph*, in numbers, of a sheet of letter press, with engravings, a correspondence from Rodez, on each event worthy of interest, which has lately attached to this celebrated cause; the fifth number has just appeared, price forty centimes, at Pillet's, at Paris. It may be bought, the price, for 12 numbers, four francs, and fifty centimes at Paris, and five francs for the departments.

N. B. An engraving representing the *Children of Bancal* at the almonry at Rodez, will accompany the sixth number.

my prison is a young man, a fisherman by trade, I wish him to teach me to make nets ; I should be charmed to be able to catch *some fish* one day. Send me some cord and some wicker."

Madame Bastide sent what her husband desired. They made no difficulty in allowing him to have it. Now all the prisoners commenced making bands of straw ; Bastide, as chief workman, distributed the packthread, and paid a sou for each web of a certain length.

The jailer then suspected some mystery. He observed, what an enormous consumption was made of cord, and besides the straw which he furnished, that of the beds commenced to be secretly employed. He redoubled his vigilance, passed four nights without sleeping, and advertised the Mayor.

The Mayor wished to put the prisoners in irons; the jailer named *Canitrot*, a devoted and indefatigable man, demanded that they might be left to act, in order to catch them in a flagrant crime, and that he would be answerable for every event. They consented to it; he forewarned the gendarmerie, who were posted as centinels.

" The conspiracy advanced. On the 3rd, at half past nine in the evening, the prisoners were silent, affected to sleep, and even to snore, and pursued their work in darkness.

At midnight they opened and entered abruptly the large dungeon in which they were confined ; they found them all up except Jausion, and a ladder of 30 feet long was finished.

They meditated their flight by an opening formerly practicable in a wall, about four toises in height, and badly stopped up with masonry. From thence they were to re-alight on a roof, then on another, leap over the wall of an inclosure, and find themselves in the open country, on a side which they have neglected to cause to be watched, since the proceedings at Rodez have been annulled.

The ladder is skilfully enough constructed. The stanchions are formed by a bundle of ten or twelve trusses bound together by knots fastened by cords, and the steps are strongly attached with wicker. An old iron hook, resting by chance in a wall, was to have served for fixing the ladder.

Jausion was found in his bed, and seems to have taken no part in the projected escape. No one doubts, that from this circumstance, which will aggravate the criminality of Bastide, Jausion seeks to argue in favour of his innocence.

Bastide had already a portmanteau attached to his shoulder, like the wallet of a soldier: he at first wished to regain his bed, but he was not able to effect it.

"Where are you going then, M. Dognat?" said the Lieutenant of the gendarmerie to him, "*you are not ignorant, sir,*" he replied, "*that I have some business; they retain me a long time here, and my small fortune suffers by it. I was going to Gros to see my wife: I should then have repaired to Albi, the day before the opening of the assizes.*"

It is pretended, that they heard him say to one of the criminals, who was to escort him, at the moment when they were in readiness to raise the ladder; "*do not, at least, forget to take away my little looking glass.*" This care appeared strange under such circumstances.

The chains were placed immediately on Bastide, and on most of the accomplices in his design.—At the moment in which I am writing to you, the ladder is exposed before the exterior gate of the prison, and all the town is going to see it.

We finish by mentioning the names of the magistrates, who will have to pronounce finally on the cause so greatly prolonged, of the murder of M. Fualdes, and who are to compose for this purpose, the court of assizes at Albi, convoked by order of my Lord Keeper of the Seals, for the 5th February, 1818. President, M. le Chevalier de Faydel.

Judges M. M. le Baron de Cambon; le Vicomte Combette de Caumont, Pagon, Pinaud, all Counsellors of the Royal Court of Toulouse; M. M. Gary and Charlet, the one Attorney General of the same Court; the other deputy, will fill the functions of the minister for public affairs. M. M. Lafon, Vice President, and Taillefer de la Portaliere, judge in the first instance of the Court of Albi, are named as supernumeraries.

M. Romiguière will continue to defend Bastide. M. Dubernat, Advocate of Toulouse, will defend Jausion. Madame Manson defends herself.

FINIS.

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